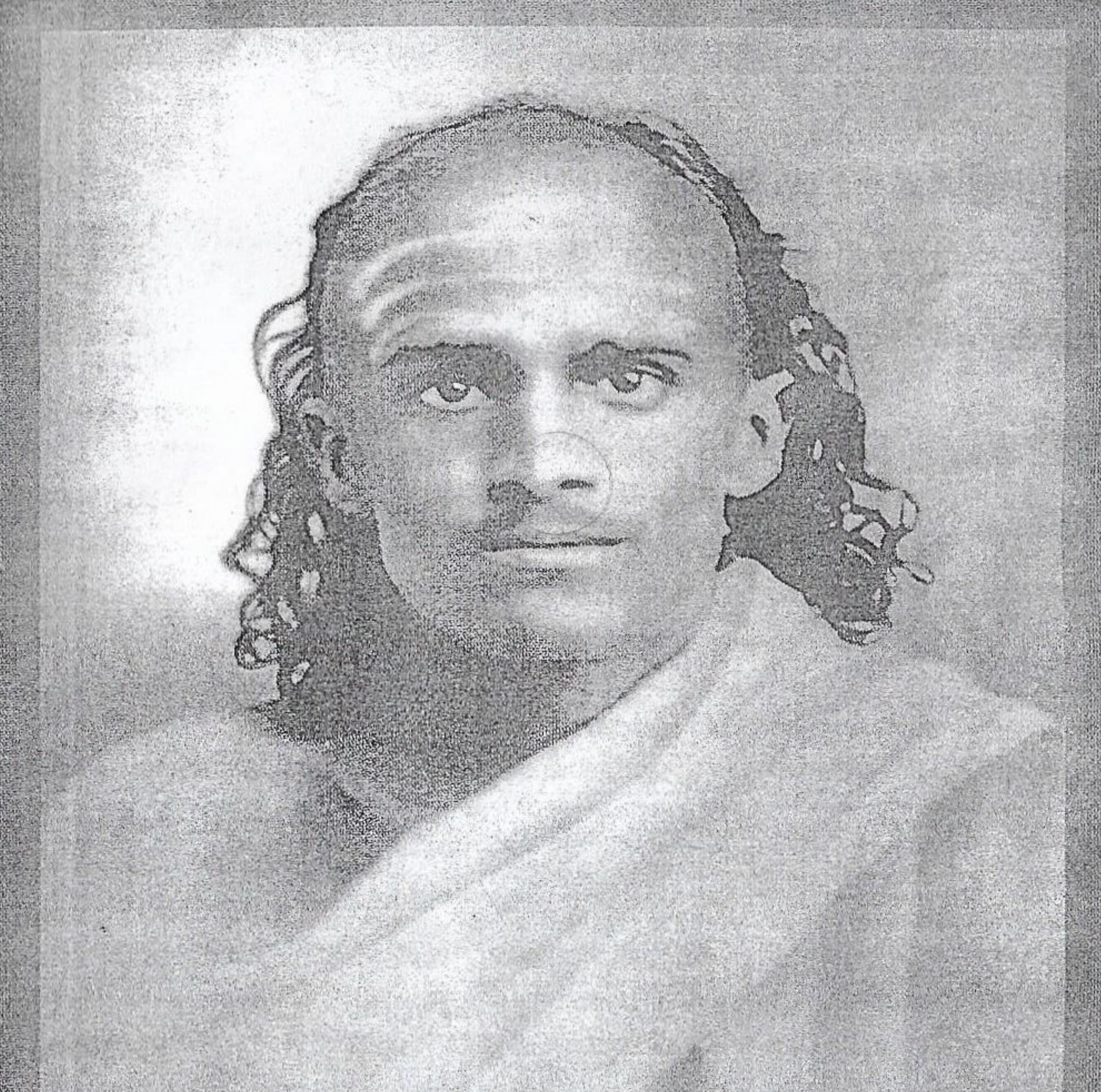
MAHATAPASVI



MAHATAPASWI

Life Story of Sri Kavya Kantha Ganapati Muni

Original in Telugu

Sri A. V. Ramana

Grand son of Sri Kavya Kantha Ganapati Muni

Translated by

Smt. Sonti Anasuyamma

MAHATAPASWI - Translation of Telugu Book, "Mahatapaswi", Life Story of Kavya Kantha Ganapati Muni *(by his grand-son A. V. Ramana, Pen-name – MaitraVaruna)* Translated to English by Smt. Sonti Anasuyamma.

112/1, Central Railway Officer's Colony,
Mathunga East, Mumbai - 400 019.

Copies : 500
September 2005

Price Rs. 100/-

Printed by
Aridra Printers
Bangalore - 560 003
Ph : 23346025

Preface

Nayana beheld a yogi sitting in absolute silence on the Arunachala hill for quite a long time. He recognized the yogi as a great rishi and named him Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. He declared Sri Ramana as his guru. Nayana proclaimed that they both had a close relationship in their previous lives. The saying goes that an enlightened person only can recognise another. Now two enlightened persons met and recognised each other. There is a difference between them though. Sri Ramana was the manifestation of Sri Kumara Swamy, the son of the Divine parents Uma and Siva while Ganapati was the incarnate Ganapati, the elder son of the Divine Parents. He was a rishi, poet, patriot and reformer who obtained the grace of the Divine Mother in the form of literary excellence and knowledge of the essence.

Any intense effort is called tapas. A tapas performed for the fulfilment of a desire is not true tapas. The visions got are only the projections of one's own mind. Until we reach the ultimate knowledge of the Self we have to continue tapas and Ganapati Muni did just that. Brahma Grandhi is a knot between the unreal Self and the real Self. Tapas is necessary to break this knot, says Nayana. Tapas is also a necessary adjunct in education, he says. A knowledge which can be achieved through sixty years of study can be achieved with six years of tapas, and Ganapati Muni proved this point when he could master the Tamil language with just ten days of tapas. Ganapati Muni tells us that the tapas he did was not for Self-knowledge but for the redemption of his motherland from slavery and ignorance. He awakened the Divine sakti in the hearts of the freedom-fighters of those days with his speeches and reformistic ideals.

Each fact of the Muni's life renders matter for quite a voluminuous book. To attempt to give thorough

biographic account of such a great one is not possible without a dedicated research. So I limited this effort of mine to bring out the literary excellence and the tapas of his life.

Dr. K. Subrahmanian was a high official in CIFL of Hyderabad and well-known as a columist of 'Between you and me' and 'Know your English' in 'The Hindu'. He was a great devotee of Sri Ramana Maharshi and lived in the service of Sri Ramana to the last minute of his life. He was the main inspiration to me in taking up this great task of writing the biography of Sri Ganapati Muni.

One day Mr Subrahmanian asked me - Mr. Ramana! Nayana's biography has not been written properly. Why don't you do that?

I was stunned. "No, Sir, I have not seen my grandfather. How can I attempt to write his biography?" K. S. was silent for a moment. Then he looked into my eyes and asked coolly 'Has everybody who wrote Rama seen Sri Rama ?'

His devotional attitude shook me up. He was suggesting that I should write in an attitude of surrender. I started to write.

The members of Sri Ramana satsang of Hyderabad encouraged me by publishing Maha Tapaswi, one chapter in each of the issues of the magazine Sri Ramana Jyoti.

My father late Sri Mahadeva Sastri had a strong desire to produce the biography of Nayana in a glorious style. He did not like the way the existing biography was written. He used to tell that his father's life lay inhered mainly in his literary works and tapas. So, one who wants to produce his biography must do research into his works and through proper sadhana bring out the essence. Through conversations between us he informed me of many unpublished points in Nayana's life. Thus

I strongly believe that his creative urge proved to be the cause of my writing this book with supreme gratitude.

I offer my prostrations to him and Sri Ramana and Ganapati Muni.

A scholar, respectable, simple, an adept in Grammar and Prosody, Vidya Praveena, Sahitya Visarada, Sri Acharya Appalla Someswara Sarma with great interest read the whole book, gave necessary touches to it and blessed me. I proffer my humble salutations to Sri Vedula Subramanya Sastry, Sri Pudipeddi Lakshmana Murthy and my sister and poet Srimati P. Visalakshi in giving me sufficient encouragement in bringing out this work.

The collection of material (for a biography) is the greatest difficulty. My elder brother Sri Purandar, sister P. Indira and younger brother Sridhar helped me in the collection. 'Vasishta Vaibhavam' in sanskrit which was originally published, the manuscripts of Nayana which were in the house and essays and historical works which published Nayanas works were my helpful material. I offer my regards to the elders and blessings to the young of my family who gave me their hearty co-operation.

If the erudite and the laymen, devotees and researchers, find this work valuable, I will consider that to be the great blessings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi and Nayana.

My humble salutations to all great souls.

A.V. Ramana
(MaitraVaruna)

Foreword

At times, a human name describes a phenomenon better than an assembly of words, phrases or even books do. For example, the name 'Buddha' is an embodiment of multiple divine facets, such as non-violence, peace and tranquility. It is hard to describe Buddha as an individual, without invoking these qualities. Better yet, he defines these divine facets and demonstrated them through his existence. Compared to the radiance of these qualities, other details related to his human life become insignificant and irrelevant. In recent years, we can rarely find an individual who can be described as an embodiment of penance ("Tapas") and perfection ("Siddhi"). We are fortunate to have an opportunity to learn about *"Naayana"* who is a personification of these qualities. It is worth noting that this great Sage (Mahatapasvi) lived amongst us in the recent times, where materialistic elements seem to dominate the course of humanity.

The reader may be wondering, who is *"Nayana"*? He was a scholar, a sage, a poet and a spiritual freedom fighter. Above all, he rose to such a high spiritual level, that he demonstrated that co-existence with the supernatural is a reality. For centuries, the learned Sages and Rishis described that "Live Energy" (Chit Shakti) is the fundamental or original element of consciousness that pervades the entire creation. The Vedas profess how to harness such energy and utilize it to achieve salvation (Moksha). Naayana was able to utilize the Vedic teachings and attain salvation, and showed us an approach, through his life, to achieve this goal.

In the great collective of sages and gurus who practiced vedic teachings, we feel Naayana uniquely positioned. For example, in modern times

- He mastered Indra Shakti, described as the ultimate power by Vedas
- He proved the existence and manifestation of the most popular, yet unrealized, inner potential energy (Kundalini)
- He demonstrated that mortals can still, today, meet the supernatural beings (devatas)

Any reader familier with Hindu or New Age spirituality recognizes the word Kundalini. While several theoretical descriptions of this phenomenon can be found in the modern literature, an unequivocal demonstration of Kundalini has not been given by anyone, other than Naayana. When an ordinary human progressively ascends to the state of Spiritual Practitioner (Saadhaka), Master (Siddha) and Sage (Mahatapasvi), the Kundalini can no longer reside in the narrow confines of human body and transcends the popularly known chakras (eg. Mooladhara) culminating in passage through Sahasaraara, resulting in the rupture of the skull (Kapala Bheda). No one in recent times has attained and survived Kapala Bheda, and told us about the incomprehensible state of unison with the ultimate. It is not an understatement to say that, Naayana is one of a very few sages in recent times to have achieved this ultimate State. This rare phenomena was witnessed by none other than Sri Ramana Maharshi, a divine incarnation himself.

The fact that Ramana Maharshi broke his years of silence to acknowledge the arrival of Naayana, is an illustration of Ramana Maharshi's special affection to Naayana, and is a great testimony, in its own right, to Naayana's spiritual existence. Here, a remarkable thing to remember is that the great Ramana Maharshi, himself, called our Mahatapasvi as "Naayana" who, until then, was known as Vaasishta Ganapathi Muni.

This book describes the real-life story of Naayana, originally written by none other than his grandson Late Sri A.V. Ramana. As recently described by several learned people, Sri A.V. Ramana was an individual who imbibed the teachings of Naayana and made a commendable service to the Telugu speaking community by publishing the real life story of Naayana in his book "Mahatapasvi". Drawing inspiration from this masterpiece, and with a noble intention to educate the rest of the world, the author Smt. Sonti Anasuyamma, has taken up this divine task of translating "Mahatapasvi" into the English language with true dedication. Her translation of the original book transcended a mere replacement of words, and brought brilliant originality that can be seen throughout this work.

This book offers, as did the original "Mahatapasvi" (Telugu) by Sri A.V. Ramana, amazing true events, such as receiving blessings and letters from Lord Ganapathi, meetings with Parashurama and Balarama, and above all, various events of divine grace in the presence of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. It would be an experience of multiple life times, to have a glimpse into this world of "Naayana".

Seeking blessings

Duddu Purnananda Sarma
Duddu Lakshmi
Chi. Duddu Sameer
Chi. Duddu Suhas

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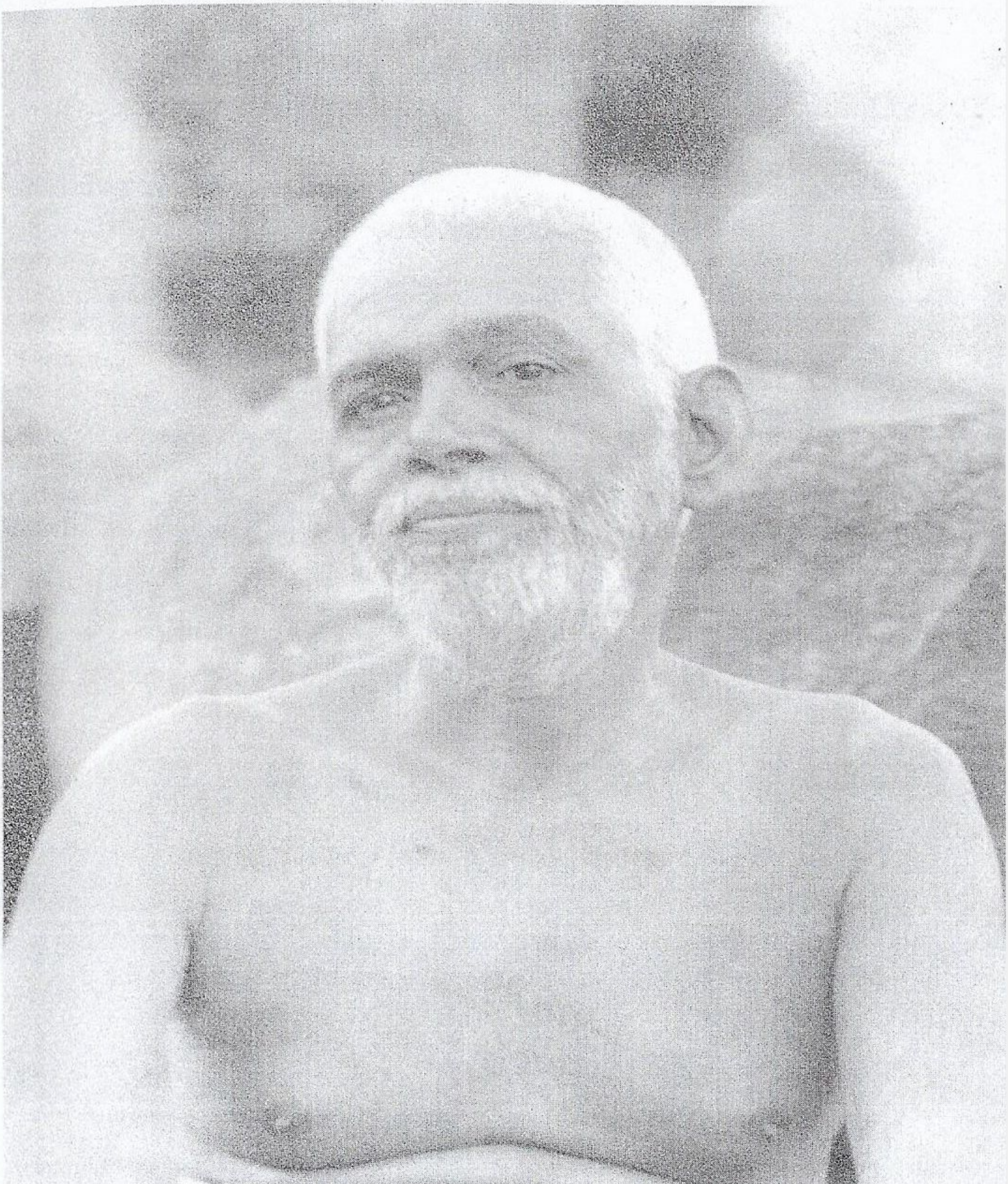
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by
Smt. Sonti Anasuyamma



PART - I

Chapter 1

TAPAS

Prakriti and Purusha are the forms of Shakti and Iswara. This universe is called Prakriti. The underlying knowledge of the creation, maintenance and destruction is Purusha. Shakti is the mother aspect and Purusha is the Lord. Ancient sages have declared this truth that the Earth, Fire, Sky, Water, Wind, Sun, Moon and Jiva are the eight manifestations of these two principles. The austerity involved in the search of this truth is called Tapas. The real goal of all people is Tapas. But many of them are intensely involved in the search of worldly achievements. Our Puranas tell us men, gods, and demons, in their search for eternal truth, have taken up Tapas as their instrument.

Sati was the daughter of Prajapati Daksha, and the wife of Lord Shiva. Once Daksha was performing a sacrifice and Sati went uninvited to attend the sacrifice. Daksha ignored his daughter and spoke derogatory words about Shiva. Unable to bear this insult to Shiva, her Lord, Sati lit the Yoga fire and burnt herself in it.

Sati took another birth as the daughter of Himavan and was called Parvati. She wanted to do Tapas to win Shiva's love. Hearing of this decision of her delicate little daughter, Mena, mother of Parvati got very much perturbed and pleaded with Parvati not to engage in tapas as it is a torture of the body.

"U (O' dear)! Ma (Please do not)" were the words Mena used in pleading with her daughter. Afterwards the two letters were combined to make the word, 'Uma', the name of Parvati.

This is the context in which the greatest poet of India, Kalidasa used the word Uma in his epic poem, "Kumara Sambhavam". Almost equal to Kalidasa in poetic talent, a very great man of austerity and recipient of boons from Sri Bhuvaneshwari Devi (Goddess of the Bhuvaneshwari Temple, in Orissa). "Ganapati Muni" gave a more edifying meaning to the name of "UMA".

भवत्यसावतो भवान्यनादिरन्तवर्जिता
जगन्ति माति नित्यमोरसौ तदभ्युधा य्युमा।
रसात्मिकाश्यतेऽखिलैरसौ ततः शिवोच्यते
परैवमीशितुश्चितिस्त्रिधा बुधैरुदीर्यते॥ 1-2-9

- Uma Sahasram

Because she is the Eternal, she is called "Bhavani". Because she is the Eternal Bliss that everyone aspires for, she is called "Shivaa". Because she is the measuring principle that measures Iswara, the Lord of the Universe, she is called "Uma". And thus the Parashakti is glorified by elders.

Here Iswara's quality of limitation is described as Uma. It can also be interpreted as the limiting faculty in the creational process. As the limited has to transcend itself to merge with the unlimited Lord, the originator of Creation, Parvati had to do tapas. This insistence on her mother's part to make the daughter give up the tapas was an idea which might have been distasteful to Ganapati Muni. So he tried to give a more appropriate interpretation to the word, 'Uma'. Erudite scholars of the day commended highly the effort of Ganapati Muni to give a different appropriate meaning to the word 'Uma'. Those who engage in tapas do not give up their basic concept under any pressure. They never give up their vision of the truth and stick to it in word and thought. This is the real vision of tapas (Tapo-drishti).

Once the ashram doctor applied surgical spirit on Bhagavan's hand where an injection had to be given. As it felt cool and pleasant, Bhagavan asked the doctor what material it was that he used. The doctor replied, 'Surgical Spirit'. Bhagavan laughed at this word and joked that a touch of 'spirit' (meaning Atma) would be very nice to be given to everybody. What a glorious twist to the meaning of an ordinary word!

Our scriptures describe the world of tapas as one of seven worlds called, Bhuh, Bhuvah, Suvah, Mahah, Janah, Tapah and Satyalokas. Tapas means an intense austere effort to reach the goal. The Vedas declare that this creation is the outcome of the Lord's tapas. The whole creation is always in search of happiness. The tapas which is done for material acquisitions becomes a torture when intensified. Tapas done for attaining the Lord's feet is elevating.

Our Puranas tell us that both gods and demons did tapas. In this sort of tapas there is a desire or some purpose to be fulfilled. It may be one for the welfare of the world or destruction. When such tapas gets its reward the general humanity is influenced according to the desire of that tapaswi. Tapas develops inner strength of the performer. Tapas in the field of spirituality makes the mind pure and draws it inwards towards the Self or the Atman.

One can attain powers or Siddhis through tapas. Telepathy and clairvoyance are some such siddhis. Once a sadhu performed tapas for fourteen years and got the siddhi of emanating perfume from his body. He went to Sri Ramakrishan Paramahamsa and boasted about his siddhi. The Paramahamsa just smiled and told him that he wasted a precious fourteen years of life for a trifle.

Most of the people who start tapas want some desire of theirs to be fulfilled. They are like a kite with a broken string. They concentrate on getting the vision of some god or other and on getting the same, rest satisfied with it, because the mind which is the instrument of tapas always deludes the aspirant and makes him think the achievement of his purpose is all in all.

Sri Bhagavan described the nature of the mind as – 'The mind is an adept in deluding. It always stays with you and deludes. Please put a strong base in my heart so that the mind may stand merged in you, O, Arunachala!' – 'Aksharamanamala'.

That which brings about the destruction of the mind is 'Tapas'.

A steady mind is the first step in the destruction of the mind. For practicing this steadiness, aspirants search for an undisturbed place. Some people torture the body by some practices like standing on one leg, on the head and some other things, thinking wrongly that this torture is tapas. Actually it is enough to sit in a restful posture and control the mind. Forests, hills, caves, and shores of rivers and the sea are considered conducive places for tapas.. Sri Ganapati Muni says that a steady mind does not need any such thing for tapas.

The power got by tapas can increase or decrease according to the way we use it. Maharshi Viswamitra is an example to this truth. He wasted the power of his tapas many times due to involvement in fulfilling his desires and those of others.

In the modern age, people can live as householders and also do tapas. That effort which elevates one is tapas. 'To attain perfection in arts and to protect one's own country also tapas is necessary', declared Sri Ganapati

Muni. He was an image of practical tapas which was practiced only by Rishis in the past. The concept of tapas is not properly understood by the present generation. He showed in practice what tapas should be in the beginning and end. To attain the acme of tapas he surrendered himself to Sri Ramana Maharshi. The Muni was an adept in the science of Mantras and Tantras and gained the knowledge that both the dual and non-dual religions lead to the same goal.

Ganapati was considered equal to Kalidasa and Sankara in poetical compositions. He brought about healthy revolution both in literary and philosophic thought. He was a Charaka in medicine, a Parasara in astrology and a Varaha Mihira in astronomy. He was a great lover of his country. He used to get the vision of any god he meditated on. He got the greatest siddhi of Kapala-bheda (breaking of the cranium) while living. He became Sri Ramana's close disciple, a model of righteousness and humility. He was proficient in various fields of knowledge. He was the living embodiment of tapas and so he ought to be described as 'Mahatapaswi', a great one in the field of tapas.

Chapter 2

HIRANYAGARBHA

नभोऽन्तरे प्रचक्षते हिरण्मयाङ्गमीश्वरं
दिनेशबिम्बपूरुषं हिरण्यगर्भमाख्यया ।
विराजमानमक्षरं विराजमन्तरे नृणां
सवित्रि तत्ववेदिनामियं तु नामकल्पना ॥ 1-2-21

O Savitri! The person who is effulgent in the space is called Eswara. He, who is reflected in the Sun is called Hiranyagarbha. Virat is the name given to the Eternal Truth inherent in human beings. These are the names given to you by those who know the Essence.

- 'Uma Sahasram'

'When righteousness is transgressed, when people discard the right path and when evil predominates, a ray of light from Hiranyagarbha descends to the earth as an incarnation', say the elders. Lord Krishna declares the same in the Gita.

These incarnations are of various types:- Paripurna (full), Avesa (emotional), Amsa (partial),and Kala (a facet). There are also Rishi (Seer), Muni (austere), Pracharaka (missionary), Duta (messenger), and Kumara (son) incarnations. There are usually some incidents as heralders of the descent of an avatar. There were some such incidents before Sri Ganapati Muni was born.

Arasavalli is a small village, two Kilometers from the town of Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh. The village is famous as the abode of Suryanarayana, the Sun god. A temple to the Sun was built here by the Eastern Kalingas

between 7th and 8th Centuries A.D., which became a famous pilgrim centre. The beautiful idol is made by black stone and possesses very powerful vibrations. The temple is so constructed that the early rays of the Sun touch the crown of the idol all through the two halves of the calendar year.

From a village called Kaluva Rayi, fifteen miles distant from Srikakulam, a Brahmin family arrived in Arasavalli on the day of the full moon in the month of Magha (Feb 1878). They came to fulfill the vow of performing first hair-cut-ceremony to their son in Arasavalli. The journey was made in a bullock cart as no other type of transport was available in those days.

Ayyala Somayajula Nrisimha Sastry was the head of the family. He was about thirty years old. He was accompanied by his wife Narasamamba and four year old son Bhima Sastry. Nrisimha Sastry was an initiate in the Dwadasakshari Mantra, which he used to repeat always. He was a landlord and the village officer. Sastry was proficient in astrology and medicine. He was an upasaka (worshipper) of the great method of Sri Vidya. He was a great lover of his country and a highly cultured person. His wife was a devotee of the Lord and a cultured lady. She used to prepare and serve food to the guests with all love like the goddess Annapurna of Varanasi. Once when Bhimasastry fell ill, the parents took a vow that they would have his first hair-cut-ceremony performed in Arasavalli.

After having his hair-cut, the child was made to bathe in the temple tank and after finishing the rituals the family entered the temple. Immediately Narasamamba surrendered herself to the Sun and fell into a trance. As the husband understood her condition, he gently held her hands and made her circumambulate the temple.

They spent the night in the temple. Narasamamba woke up from the trance early in the next morning and told her husband about the vision she had the previous night. A god, holding a vessel of fire in his hand, issued out of the Sun god's idol and putting the vessel in Narasamamba's hand disappeared. From that moment onwards, she was filled with great joy and elation. She did not know whether it was a blessing or otherwise.

Sastry was a great upasaka and as soon as he heard of the account of his wife's vision, looked at the top of the temple tower. He understood that the god emanating out of the idol was Hiranyagarbha who is the presiding deity of the Sun and he assured his wife that the god had blessed her with a child who would be born with the power and energy of the Sun god.

Filled with joy and elation, the family returned to their home. Soon Narasamamba conceived a child.

Chapter 3

THE TRUTH OF THE WORD (AKSHARA)

भगवति निजौ साक्षात्पुत्रौ बृहस्पतिपावकौ
गणपतिगुहावेतौ वेषान्तरव्यवहारतः ।
भरतधरणीखण्डे हेतोः कुतः कृतसम्भवौ
कलकलयुते काले देवि व्यधाः कथय द्रुतम् ॥ 9-34-7

O Mother! Please tell me why you have made your own sons Brihaspati and Agni, be born as Ganapati and Guha in this land of Bharata in these tumultuous times.

- 'Uma Sahasram'

When Narasamamba was about to complete seven months of pregnancy, her husband took her to her parent's house and left her there for the delivery of the child. He entrusted his brother Prakasa Sastry with the welfare of the family and himself left for Varanasi to bathe in the Ganga and visit the temple of Visweswara during the month of Kartikam and accumulate merit.

Sastry reached 'Varanasi' in due time and engaged himself in the customary austerities and bath in Ganga and visits to the temples of Annapurana and Visweswara, the main deities of Varanasi.

The uninterrupted flow of grace of God in us is Bhakti. Bhakti brings about the fulfillment of the desires of the aspirant. Alas! Man dissipates all his time and energy in running after the fulfillment of selfish desires.

Nrisimha Sastry was a prudent man. He was an austere person who knew the value of life. His life was

dedicated to god and it brought him the grace of the Sun-god of Arasavalli.

It was the eigth day after the New moon in the month of Karthikam in the year Bahudhanya. Nrisimha Sastry was sitting in front of the idol of Dumti Ganapati near the temple of Visweswara in Kasi. He was repeating Navakshara Ganapati mantram. It was two hours past sunrise. The concentrated gaze of Sastry beheld a vision of a boy crawling out from the idol towards himself. The child climbed on to his lap. Sastry understood that his tapas was fulfilled.

Full of joy, tears gushed down his cheeks. He prayed to Ganapati and went home in the evening. As he interpreted the vision as an indication of the birth of a son, he started his journey home.

As expected, he received the good news of the birth of a son as soon as he reached Kaluva Rayi and proceeded to Logisa Agraharam. Sastry was surprised to hear that the child was born exactly at the time of his vision. Thus a divine child was born ot Nrisimha Sastry on 17-11-1878 A.D.

The boy who was born by the grace of the Sun-god and god Ganapati was named 'Surya Ganapati'.

In Ganapati Suktam, Ganapati, the son of Eswara was described as Brahmanaspati and also Brihaspati, the Lord of poetry and all knowledge. Ganapati was the scribe who wrote down all that was dictated to him by Vyasa Maharshi who arranged the Vedas in a lucid form. He was the word incarnate. The self-same god Ganapati took the form of Ganapati Muni who later became the disciple of Sri Ramana Maharshi, the world teacher. Ganapati proclaimed Sri Ramana as Maharshi and gave him the name of Ramana. This time the god Ganapati in the form

of Ganapati Muni became a scribe to Sri Ramana. He composed Sri Ramana Gita and various other treatises.

यद्दीपाद्रमणाख्याद्व्याप्तं गाणपतीषु ।
वाणी भित्तिषु धत्ते गीता चित्र विलासं ।
आलंबेन विहीनं व्योमाभं परिपूर्णम्
निश्शब्दं गुरु रूपं तद्ब्रह्म स्फुरतान्मे ॥

- Guru Geetham

May that form of the Guru, the unsupported, subtle as space and perfect silence which emanates from the lamp called Sri Ramana and is painted on the walls of words of Sri Ganapati as pictures called Ramana Gita intuit me!

Chapter 4

THE FAMILY

एतामाहुरविद्यां बीजं संसारवृक्षराजस्य ।
सर्वरसफलयुतस्य प्रारब्धजलेन देवि दोहदिनः ॥ 1-4-13

This ever changing cycle of birth and death is the great tree whose seed is the perception of difference which is called Avidya or ignorance. Prarabdha or the resultant of past deeds that has started to bear fruit is the water that sustains this tree. The juices of the fruits of this tree are the nine essences - the esoteric, fearsome, heroic, terrific, comic, etc.

- Uma Sahasram

There is a village called Valangaiman near the holy city of Kumbhakonam in Tamil Nadu. Certain 'Vadama Brahmin families of this village have migrated to Andhra areas a few hundred years back. They settled themselves in the Godavari river basin. As they have come from Dravida country (Tamil Nadu), they were called Dravida Brahmins.

Among them a line, 'Ayala Somayajulas' who are the descendants of the rishis, Vasishta, Mitravaruna and Kaundinya were much famous. Ayala Somayajula Vissanna was the founder of this line. They acquired the title of Nawab through their activity. One of his sons, Ellanna and his branches went to the east and settled down in Vijayanagaram, Bobbili, Sitanagaram, Parvatipuram and Palakonda Taluks.

YELLAPPA

↓

S/o VISSANNA

↓

JAGANNADHA SASTRY (2nd son)

↓

SOMAVADHANI
(Worked in 'NANDABALAGA', studied Rig and Yajur Vedas)

↓

BHEEMA SASTRY

↓

JAGANNATHA SASTRY
(3rd son of BHIMASASTRY. Erudite in 'Kavyas', Puranas Married Ganti Sarvappa Sastry's daughter and hence settled at Kaluva Rai)

↓

BHEEMA SASTRY
(Erudite in Literature, Astrology and Medicine)

↓

NRUSIMHA SASTRY (3rd son) — PRAKASA SASTRY (7th son)

NRUSIMHA SASTRY ↓

BHEEMA SASTRY — **GANAPATI SASTRY** **(Mahatapaswi)** — ANNAPURNA — SIVARAMA SASTRY (Adopted by Prakasasastry)

GANAPATI SASTRY ↓

MAHADEVUDU (Wife: Rajeswari) — VAJRESWARI (Husband: 'Ganti Somayajulu')

MAHADEVUDU ↓

INDIRA — VISALAKSHI — PURANDHAR — **VENKATA RAMANA** **(Author)** — SREEDHAR

Chapter 5

THE CURE

योगिनो बोधयन्तीमां। योगेन नियतव्रताः।
सर्वार्पकस्य देहे सा। स्वयमेव समुल्लसेत्॥

O Mother! Yogis surrendering themselves totally take refuge in Thee, get Thy guidance through yoga and are steady in meditating on Thee. Thou shinest in Prachanda Chandi Trisati in all glory.

Prachanada Chandi Trisati

Those great souls who are born for a purpose do not manifest themselves with any emblems of deities. They move around among people as ordinary men. When needed, they manifest their powers unassumingly. Under particular circumstances they may exhibit them. Bhagavan Sri Ramana was a simple boy called Venkataraman till he got the death experience. None knew what was the cause of that experience. It must be construed only as god's will. There are some siddhas who are absolutely silent sitting in unreachable places and others who exhibit strange behaviour. Whether they are always in the state of yoga or not, none but themselves know. Hence the elders say that only a realized soul can recognize another realized soul.

Surya Ganapati was quite a normal child upto his sixth year. The only defect in him was that he would not speak. He understood what was spoken to him, but would not reply and not even call his mother Amma. He was not interested in either play or study, or even food. He had to be forced to do anything needful. The boy used to sit silent with closed eyes all the time. Sometimes he

used to lose his consciousness. The body got warm sometimes without any apparent cause. This condition of the child worried his parents naturally.

When someone opined that he was dumb and someone else that he was perhaps epileptic, the mother felt extremely sad. Nrisimha Sastry also could not understand this condition of his son. Actually there were no symptoms of any disease whatsoever. So Sastry wanted to try one of the cures described in medicine for neuro-cleaning. He heated a piece of turmeric and applied it on the temple of the boy where 'Amritanadi' is located.

After getting treated like this, the boy started to articulate, and he said, 'Amma (mother)!' for the first time. Narasamamba's joy knew no bounds when she heard her son voiced her name. Now pure speech, fine and poetic, gushed forth from the boy's mouth. This flow of pure speech made people wonder if the boy was not a great scholar. The goddess of speech danced on his tongue. If what ailed the boy till now was only epilepsy, this treatment would not have brought about such a scholarly fluency, thought the father.

Later when Nrisimha Sastry had darshan of Bhagavan Sri Ramana, he understood that the treatment he gave to the boy in his childhood was faulty and felt his mistake was grevious. His grand daughter Visalakshi described his feelings in her book, 'Vasishta Vijayam'. Sastry must have disturbed the yoga of her son. 'Yogis behave like children, mad people and pisachas' quote elders often. However the wonderful boy became a poet par excellence.

Chapter 6

EDUCATION

Maharshi Satyavachas, son of Radhitara declared that the Truth is the most glorious thing. Maharshi Paurusishti, son of Purusishti declared Tapas is the greatest thing to be achieved. Maharshi Naaka, son of Mudgala considered Swadhyaya and Pravachana (study and dissemination of Knowledge) as the highest goal to be attained.

Study (Swadhyaya) and teaching (Pravachana) are the basis of relationsip beween the teacher and the taught. A great saint who was studying Vedas wished and prayed for another birth to continue the study of Vedas. So, education (Vidya) means quite a prolonged sadhana. Once Sri C D Deshmukh, a great politician and freedom fighter said that Sri Ganapati Muni was the last of the great tradition of Sanskrit poets. Sanskrit is called the language of the gods because one can understand the vedic culture only through the study of Sanskrit.

The foreign rule and the influence of the foreign missionaries and other religions have separated the general public from the Vedas, vedic culture and also Sanskrit. During the British rule, due to English education gradually foreign culture has seeped into the life style of Indians. If a Ganapati Muni was born at such chaotic times, it is the greatness of his father Sri Nrisimha Sastri and his love of Sanskrit and Telugu and his sincere belief in the gurukula educational system. It was the traditional method to perform upanayanam, give Mantradiksha to the student and then leave him in a gurukula (educational centre). At the gurukula, tapas was also a part of the proforma of studies. The Vedas declare तपश्च स्वाध्याय प्रवचने च दमश्च स्वाध्याय प्रवचनेच.

Sri Ganapati Muni has proclaimed that tapas is a method of education. In the year of 1927 A.D. Ganapati Muni gave a Presidential address in the Silver Jubliee celebrations of Sri Krishna Devaraya Bhasha Nilaya in which he elaborated on the need for tapas in a student of the languages. The following is the gist of the lecture.

'There are two methods of linguistic knowledge. One is learning the language methodically and the other is by doing tapas. The great writers in both Telugu and Sanskrit have mastered the language of their choice by doing tapas intensely and produced many master-pieces in that language. By the power of tapas the Paravac (the greatest source of the Word) in the Muladhara gets activated and showers its grace on the devotees. Thus graced by the Paravac devotee becomes irrefutable in all fields of knowledge. Though I have a very good opinion of regular and methodical study, I have more trust and belief in tapas. A person who has done tapas for a few months has more power of the word and is more knowledgeable than one who has studied systematically for years together. The library of the Muladhara is a bigger and vaster one than the greatest library in the world. The Muladhara Library is locked by a lock called Brahmagrandhi. The only key to open this lock is tapas. So, every student and every poet has to do some tapas of repetition of a mantra and try to open this Brahmagrandhi lock. At the end of the tapas the library which holds the knowledge of the whole universe opens itself to the tapaswi'.

Along with the studies, one has to follow the ethics thoroughly and then only does he become perfect. This is the method of teaching in a Gurukula.

Narasimha Sastry had great foresight. So he performed SuryaGanapati's 'upanayanam' and gave him

the Gayatri mantra and also the twelve mantras. Thus the father became the first Guru to Ganapati.

As there were no gurukulas as of old, Ganapati was sent to his uncle Prakasha Sastry to learn both Sanskrit and Telugu languages. Ganapati had a unique memory. So he could learn anything the first time he was taught. He could repeat perfectly anything he was taught only once. So he became proficient in the basics, Amaram, Balaramayanam and Siva-Sahasram before he completed eight years.

Ganapati learnt astrology from his father and at the same time, discovered a method of calculating a calendar of the year. He prepared a special calender in his ninth year.

The boy Ganapati had the power of prediction since his childhood. He could foretell exactly whatever anybody wanted to know about their future. This surprised one and all and people from far and near used to come to him for perdictions. Ganapati's fame spread in all the four corners of the region in no time. Ganapati was also a leader in sports. He was one to contend with in swimming, cards and chess. Once a pack of cards is distributed among the players he would know exactly what the other players had in their hands.

Before even completing ten years of age, Ganapati became proficient in the fields of grammar and logic. He started composing poetry in Sanskrit language. Finding his prowess in composing verses, his Gurus Prakash Sastry, Venkateswara Sastry and Venkateswara Ghanapatthi wanted to test the boy. They asked him to compose in verse the subject of the birth of both Pandavas and Kauravas within 48 minutes.

Ganapati composed the story of the given subject in 34 minutes at the rate of one verse in one minute.

The Gurus were wonder struck at his erudition and blessed him from their hearts. Ganapati also composed a Khanda Kavya, 'Sukanya Charitam' in his childhood to the heart's elation of his father.

Chapter 7

TAPAS

गणपतये स्तनघटयोः पदकमले सप्तलोकभक्तेभ्यः ।
अधरपुटे त्रिपुरजिते दधासि पीयूषमम्ब त्वम् ॥ 3-11-20

O, Mother Divine! Thou givest nectar to the son Ganapthi through thy breast, Amritam through thy lotus feet to the seven worlds who have surrendered to thee and Rasa through thy glorious lips to Siva who conquered the three worlds.

- Uma Sahasram

Amrita is the opposite of Mrita, death. Because there cannot be death to knowledge, knowledge is deemed Amrita. Arts are the creation out of knowledge and hence arts are also Amrita. Makarandam is the experience of the Rasa in any art. The power of knowledge emanating from the 'Chit' power of the Divine Mother manifests itself through the mind and intellect of individuals as art. The people who experience the Rasa of art enjoy the Makarandam.

As is described in this sloka Ganapati has declared that as he was the son of the Divine Mother, he was receiving knowledge from the Divine Mother's breast as the milk of sustenance.

Sri Sivapadahridaya Pillaiyar was the resident of the town Sriyali. His wife Bhagavati gave birth to a son called Aladi Pillaiyar. When the boy was three years old, the father took him to the temple of Tiruttoniappar. He made the child sit in a corner on the steps of the temple tank and repeating Aghamarshana Mantram entered the tank

to bathe. As the child could not see the father because he was dipping his head in the tank as part of the bath, he started crying loudly Appa, Amma (father! mother!). The Divine couple Siva and Parvati, the deities of the temple heard the cry of the child. Siva asked Parvati to give him milk from her breast. The child, who drank the milk of knowledge from Parvati Devi's breast immediately started to compose and sing divine poetry. The child was Jnana Sambandhar who was also called Dravida Sisuvu.

This is the way of the grace of the Mother. She blessed Ganapati also in the same way and Ganapati started to compose nectar like poetry from his early childhood. He got the netarine grace of the Divine Mother through his own mother's milk. Since the time when Suryaganapati entered the womb of Narasamamba she became a great devotee of the Lord and a storehouse of spiritual knowledge. She adored the child considering him as the boon of God and so her love towards the child was more spitritual than mundane.

It is God's divine purpose to awaken the hearts of people who were born to fulfill divine purpose as the prescribed purpose of their life. Nobody can restrict them to the mundane life. King Suddhodana tried to restrict his son Gautama to the pleasures of kingly riches, but one hour's journey through the town opened his eyes to the evanescent nature of the world and made him one of the greatest recluses. In the same way, the time was ripe for the awakening of the boy Ganapati who was the darling of the family living home-life considering it as heaven.

It was 12th October in the year of the 1888. Mother Narasamamba was stitching leaf plates inside veranda of the house. Ganapati was sitting nearby and reading some book. Mother was in full pregnancy expecting delivery any time. She was very much tired and weak at that time.

As she was a reserved type of woman, she did not tell anybody about her weak condition. Suddenly, she called "Suryam!" and Ganapati responded without his eyes off the book he was reading. 'Is today auspicious for delivery, son?', the mother asked her son who was famous for perfect prediction.

The son did not understand the purport of the mother's anxious question. Without lifting his eyes from his book, he replied very casually, 'If there is going to be a delivery, twins will be born and the mother and children will die.'

Ganapati's uncle Prakash Sastri who was hearing this conversation was stunned and pained at the reply of the nephew to the mother's query. He knew the condition of Narasamamba and the cause of her question. He took his nephew to task for replying so heartlessly and casually to his mother. Naturally, tears shimmered in the eyes of the innocent boy.

But the mother who knew that devotion was the acme of life knew that God's own purpose would be fulfilled anytime. So she understood that her son has proclaimed only the inevitable in his innocence and embraced him with tears of joy.

The word of the child was the word of God. Narasamamba gave birth to twins in the evening and left the mortal coil along with the twins. Next minute, the happy family was submerged in sorrow.

The house was filled with relatives and some of them scolded the boy for his unseemly prediction.

The boy did not take to heart the scolding of the relatives because his mind became introverted at this unforeseen calamity. He began to contemplate on the severe sorrow which death of a person could bring about.

He asked himself, 'What is this entity who has left the body of the mother? If life is so short, what is the greatest achievement to aspire for?' And he became a seeker of Truth in this sorrow which a dear mother's death brought about. The holy life and death of the mother became the first spiritual master to awaken Ganapati to Reality.

The flute which was giving out divine music till then became mute and silence reigned in the atmosphere.

Chapter 8

HITOPADESA

ब्रह्माण्डे यावदस्तीह हृदितावच्च विद्यते।
व्यष्टेरनुभवो यावांस्ततो, मनसि साधिकम्॥

All that which is contained in the cosmos is in the heart. All that which a person experiences resides in his mind. Hence he, who has intuitive knowledge can know everything.

- 'Viswamimamsa' Ganapati Muni

Elders say that there is no need of any external symbol like the sacred thread for a Brahmin whom the whole world knows as one. It is not just the recognition of the world that is needed here. It is the knowledge of the Self which is inherent in everybody. A real seeker has to be steady in the knowledge of his Self. This knowledge is called, 'Prajna' or consciousness. This Prajna can be attained by fixing the mind unwaveringly in the heart. The light of mental cognizance is limited. It cannot give anything more than personal experience. Only when this steadiness is achieved can a man become a 'Krantadarshi', knower of the beyond. Only such an one can be a true poet. He who does not get involved in the knowledge of the past, present and the future and is dedicated to the Divine Mother and engages himself in extolling Her divine qualities can possess the ability of manifesting them in pure, glorious words. This is the knowledge that Ganapati gained after the death of his mother.

ममतु विमला हृद्या विद्या महेश्वरि याऽभव-
न्मनसि च परा चित्रा शक्तिश्चिरन्तनि याऽभवत्।

वचसि च महद्भाग्यं श्लाघ्यं यदीह्यतमेऽभवत्
तदयि गलितं मत्तो वित्तत्रयं भवतो भुवि ॥ 9-34-12

'O, Mother! I used to have 'Hridaya vidya' previously. I had great lasting, glorious power. There was grandeur in my word. Alas, since I am born on this earth, I have lost all these three treasures.'

- Uma Sahasram

Ganapati was still observing silence even after two months of his mother's death. He was meditating all the time on the Divine Mother and would not show any interest in play or studies. He always courted solitude and seemed to be searching for some goal. People thought that the boy was still grieving over his mother's death. Some thought that he was angry at the scolding he got. It was Prakash Sastry who scolded him most. Hence Sastry started to cajole Ganapati with soft words. No words could console him as there was no hurt involved. Ganapti heard with a sweet humility all the consolation that Sastry was giving, but, would not open his mouth.

Nrisimha Sastry was dispirited due to the loss of his wife in the prime of life. He was 43 years old when he had to face this great calamity. Added to this sorrow, the son Ganapati began to behave strangely. Sastry faced all these difficulties with extreme composure.

Till he was ten years old, Ganapati continued in this silent posture. Now he had passed his childhood and entered adolescence and was a little wiser. So, Sastry tackled the son's problem with sufficient care and equanimity. He wanted to elicit from Ganapati the difficulty that was ailing him. One day, after lunch, Sastry called Ganapati to him and asked him with soft words what his problem was.

Sastry:- 'Ganapati, dear son, it is two months since your mother left her mortal coil. Since that time, you have become moody and silent. How long are you going to continue in this mood? Your teachers are waiting for you to resume your studies. Why do you not cast off your sorrowful mood and resume your studies?'

Ganapati lifted his face and looked steadily at his father with all humility, but would not reply. Sastry, 'Are you angry that people have scolded you? How can you be blamed for your mother's death? Whatever had to happen happened. If you become cheerful as of old, my heart will rejoice.'

Ganapati did not know what to reply. He did not know his own mind. He knew the predicament of the father. He did not want to break the silence. So, he went on listening to his father in silence. The persistent obduracy of the son angered the father.

Sastry:- (in a harsh tone), 'Silence is the attitude of rishis and tapswins. The silence they observe is tapas, it is yoga. You are not like them. You are still living a mundane life. Your attitude is at the most only obstinacy. This is the quality of barbarians.'

The word, 'Tapas' that issued out of the father's mouth must be father's message, thought the son. This is then the method to be followed in the search for Truth. Ganapati at last, understood the purpose of his life. So, he prostrated to the Divine Mother in his heart, and with a beaming face broke his silence. He addressed his father thus, 'Dear father! I want to perform tapas. Please bless me.'

At this strange request of the son, Sastry remembered the story of the five year old Dhruva of old.

Suniti and Suruchi were the two wives of King Uttanapada. Once Suruchi's son Uttama was being

fondled by the King, while the mother stood by enjoying the good fortune of her child. Dhruva, the son of Suniti entered at that moment and seeing his brother being fondled in the lap of the father desired himself to be fondled like his brother. When the boy expressed his desire, Surichi, spoke to him in harsh words saying that one, when born from a womb of an unfortunate woman should not expect for the good fortune of sitting on his father's lap, which he did not deserve. If Dhruva wanted to enjoy the glory of sitting on the lap of his father like Uttama, he had better do tapas, propitiate the Lord Vishnu, and get the desire fulfilled by being born to her.

The child Dhruva got extremely hurt and being a Kshatriya, could not gulp the hurt. So, he decided to do tapas in a forest and propitiate the Lord. Seeing the determination of the child, Maharshi Narada appeared to him on the way and told him, 'Tapas is a great auspicious yajna and so should not be used for paltry purposes. Children should be beyond praise and insult and a good being must be above them'. The sage thus tried to pacify Dhruva. But, the child would not be diverted from his purpose and asked the sage to bless him showing the way for fulfilling it. Finally, sage Narada gave a mantra of Vishnu to Dhruva. Dhruva after performing severe tapas for six months had the darshan of Lord Vishnu. Dhruva folded his hands in great devotion and wanted to praise the Lord, but, being only a child of five, was not able to praise the Lord. Lord Vishnu understood the inability of the child and touched his head with His conch. At this touch, Divine words of praise issued forth from the child's mouth and the Lord gave him the boon of his desire. Because of the touch of the divine conch, Dhruva later got his eyes opened and felt sad at his own stupidity in asking mundane things when the Lord Himself appeared before him.

A person should be pure and quite ripe to perform an auspicious thing like tapas. A tapas done by the prompting of a momentary impulse of renunciation does not give any lasting good. Education is necessary for proper understanding. This was the story of the unfortunate lack of proper perception of Dhruva.

Ganapati was also a child like Dhurva. He must first become a tapaswin in the field of studies. His studies must be utilized for the upliftment of humanity. He might afterwards become a spiritual giant by performing great tapas being incepted in childhood with the idea of tapas.

Nrisimha Sastry knew the workings of his son's mind. So, he advised the child that he should first master his studies and later, when he grew up sufficiently could think of tapas. Ganapati also understood his father's advice and gave up his attitude of silence and thus pleased his father. Now, the boy started paying full attention to studies.

Chapter 9

MARRIAGE

श्रीखण्डचर्चामिव कल्पयन्त्यो मुहुः कपोलेषु सखीजनस्य।
श्रीकण्ठकान्तहसिताङ्कुराणां श्रीमन्ति कुर्वन्तु जगन्ति भासः ॥

2-5-1

May the brilliant waves of light of the beautiful smiles of Parvati (Siva's consort) which always spread like white Chandana paste on the cheeks of her friends make the worlds prosperous.

- Uma Sahasram

Here Mother Uma's smiles at the time of her marriage with Siva are gloriously described. In this pure soft and delicate poem, the author has described the smiles of Uma in a rare poetical simile comparing with white Chandana paste. The qualities of this sandalwood paste are purity, pleasurability and beauty. Parvati's smiles fascinate Siva who conquered the God of desire, Kama. Chandana paste increases the fire of desire. The inspiration for the thought of marriage which arose in Siva, the Lord of the universe, was the smile of Parvati. It is a rare simile to compare it with the paste of sandalwood.

Jaya and Vijaya are the bosom friends of Parvati. The light of her smiles spreads on their cheeks like chandana paste. This description brings out in innuendo that the cheeks of Jaya and Vijaya are the flags of the success of Parvati's smiles. The poet prays the Mother to spread that glory on the whole world and make it prosperous.

As Ganapati had such a great ability to describe the Mother's marital glory, Mother Parvati made him adopt a householder's life so that he may have the right

perspective of marital life. The boy who till then was incessantly thinking of only tapas was wedded to a girl who was both beautiful and humble.

In the taluq of Bobbili there was a village called Bommikapadu, at a little distance from Ganapati's village, Kaluvarai. Visalakshi was the only daughter of an orthodox Brahmin called Karra Bhushana Sarma, a resident of Bommikapadu. She was fair and good-looking with large brilliant eyes. Her horoscope told that she would become the wife of a great rishi. Visalakshi's father, who was searching for such an ideal boy happened to hear of the extra-ordinary poetic talent and rare intellect of Ganapati. So Bhushana Sarma went to Kaluvarai to offer Visalakshi to Ganapati in marriage.

Narasimha Sastry received Visalakshi's father with all honour and both of them studied the horoscopes of the boy and the girl. As the horoscopes matched perfectly, they agreed to get the children married.

Ganapati, when he heard of his father's intentions of getting him married, asked him whether marriage was not a hurdle to tapas. His father answered, 'No, boy, marriage is not proscribed in the tradition of the rishis. The ancient rishis were mostly householders and they did tapas at the same time. There is no destiny of Sanyas in your horoscope. So, you may get married and observe the tradition of the rishis.'

Ganapati had great faith in astrology and he knew that his horoscope did not show at any period a life of a renunciate. So, he let his father decide the issue of his marriage.

It was customary for a girl to be married in her eighth year. The sloka, 'Ashta Varsha bhavet Kanya . . . 'describes this custom. So, Visalakshi of eight years was married to Ganapati who was in his twelfth year.

In later years also Ganapati never advocated renunciation. Even his son was advised to get married when he wanted to start on the path of tapas. The Theosophical Society wanted to groom Mahadeva, Ganapati's son, as a 'Vedapurusha' like lord Krishna by making him an adept in Mantra, Tantra and Yoga methods. Ganapati rejected the proposal outright.

Even after the death of Visalakshi, Ganapati did not adopt sanyas. His belief was that tapaswins should be involved in the welfare of the society also. The books, 'Sadacharabodhini' and 'Kama Sutras' show us his attitude towards society.

Chapter 10

LITERARY GLORY

वन्दामहे महादेवं यस्य वन्दारवो जनाः ।
नविन्दति पुनर्मातुः कुच कुम्भ पयोरसं ।।

'I salute Mahadeva by prostrating to whom man does not get born again to drink the milk of a mother's breast.'

- Early poems of Ganapti

In the field of literary achievement, education is a necessary process. Only a few can excel in this, as true aspiration is a rare commodity. If a student of literature wants to get stabilized in the world of literature, he must have a fearless attitude to probe the root of any subject he is dealing with. He must have an independent and analytical approach, an unbiased critical appreciation and a thorough authority over linguistic nuances to become a perfect student.

Ganapati completed the study of the five great poetical works in Sanskrit (Panchava Kavyas) by the time he finished fifteen years of his age. He studied Champu Ramayanam, Kuvalayananda, Pratapa Rudriyam and many more great works in Sanskrit literature and got a thorough hold on the divine language. He developed a special style of his own and got the applause of great scholars. Since his childhood, Ganapati held the opinion that poetry should cater to the changing needs of the society. Literature should be able to promote the welfare of the society. Orthodox poetic rules and regulations should not bind it. In such an attitude Ganapati in his fourteenth year threw this challenge to the literary world.

'If this, my poetry does not cater to the pleasure of some inept minds, what do I lose? Does a cuckoo sing to the pleasure of a crow?'

This was not a pronouncement made in ire at somebody's adverse comment of on his poetry. It is only the declaration of his independent thought, the outcome of his revolutionary approach. If Ganapati had the courage to point out the ineptitudes in Puranas and epics, it was due to his independent nature and attitude of service to society. In one of the sittings of the Indian National Congress meetings, Ganapati met Gandhiji and expressed his opinion that it would be greatly beneficial to the Nation if Sanskrit could be made the official language. Gandhiji expressed his doubt about the possibility of Ganapati's proposal as only very few people knew the language. At this, Ganapati took up the task of making Sanskrit easy and created a simplified Sanskrit called, 'Laalibhasha' and presented it to the elders of the Congress. They were wonder struck at this undaunted spirit of Ganapati.

Ganapati wrote a poem, 'Bhringa Sandesam' in the mode of Kalidasa's 'Megha Sandesam' choosing his wife's long traits of hair as the messenger, but destroyed it afterwards.

The influence of poet Kalidasa and Sri Sankara is very much evident in Ganapati's works. Spiritual thought embossed in beautiful poetry is the method nearest to his heart. He rode in the footsteps of Sankara to delineate the subject of choice. His great devotion to these glorious gods of poetry can be understood by the tribute he paid to them:-

कृपावलोको नगकन्यकायाः करोतु मे निर्मलमन्तरङ्गम् ।
येनाङ्कितः शङ्कर एकतत्वं विश्वं लुलोके जगते जगौ च ॥

4-13-3

'May that merciful look of the Divine Mother, which, Sri Sankara became dedicated to, and which transformed the whole universe into a single being purify my innermost heart.'

कालीकटाक्षो वचनानि मह्यं ददातु मोचामदमोचनानि ।
यत्पातपूतं रघुवंशकारं नराकृतिं प्राहुरजस्य नारीम् ॥ 4-13-4

May that gracious look of the Divine Mother, Kali, which made the world of scholars declare Kalidasa, the author of 'Raghuvamsa', a glorious incarnation of Mother Saraswati, the Goddess of wisdom, shower on me power to vocate poetry which purifies all sinful utterances.

- Uma Sahasram

During his adolescent period (14-18), Ganapati studied in the State Government School in Bobbili town and completed the grammar treatise, 'Siddhanta Kaumudi'. He studied both grammar and prosody under a famous scholar in Logisa Agraharam, the village of his maternal grandfather. He also studied the Puranas and epics, of Vyasa and Valmiki and acquired the ability to give discourses on them.

The wife joined Ganapati at this stage and understanding her husband's ideals, assisted him in all his projects with heart and soul. Nrisimha Sastry and his other family members felt immensely happy at Visalakshi's amicable nature and sweet behaviour.

Chapter 11

AN UNFRUITFUL EFFORT

विज्ञानि यन्मुहुरिदं च मनश्चलं यत्
सौख्यं नकिञ्चदपि यद्यदुपर्यसौख्यं ।
त्वा माश्रितस्य च ममाखिल लोक राज्ञि
मत्तः परो जगति को मनुजेषु कल्कि ॥

O! Empress of the worlds! In spite of surrendering my heart and soul to Thee, my efforts are still unfruitful. My mind wavers all the time. Is there any one more unfortunate and sinful than me?

- Uma Satakam

Thus praying to the Mother, Ganapati laughed at himself. He left the place Dusi and reached Tekkali village. The excessive strain of the journey made his limbs very weak. Ganapati was hungry. He stood before a house and begged for food. The mistress of the house saw his pitiable condition, but at that point of time there were only a few morsels of food, the left-over of the previous meal. She thought a few minutes and as Ganapati was only a boy, she decided she could serve him with that food. She fed him with all love the small quantity of food and Ganapati ate it avidly and lay down to sleep on the verandah of the house. He started reminiscing the recent occurrences.

It was two months since he left home. As Visalakshi went to her parent's house to perform an austerity during the month of Sravanam, he, along with his elder brother Bhima Sastry and a friend Venkateswara Sastry went to the city of Rajamahendravaram to perform tapas. After

about four days stay Bhima Sastry could not withstand the strain of tapas and went home.

Now only Venkateswara Sastry remained as Ganapati's companion. They both searched for a suitable place for tapas, but could find none in that crowded city of pilgrimage.

Gradually Ganapati glided into peaceful sleep. At about seven O'Clock, the landlord finished his dinner and came out holding a lantern in his hand. He saw Ganapati clearly in the light of the lamp. As the light got focused on him, Ganapati woke up. The landlord offered him dinner. Ganapati was not feeling hungry as he had a late meal. Now two persons bound for Varanasi came and joined them. Hearing that Ganapati was bound for Varanasi, they felt happy that they had another co-passenger on their journey. All of them opened a pack of cards and started playing a game. While Ganapati and the other passengers bound for Kasi were playing cards, the other end of the veranda was occupied by some elderly people and the landlord. Ramadas (landlord) gave some horoscopes to be perused to an elderly man among them. The astrologer was giving out the results of his reading. Ganapati who was on the other side of the veranda heard these readings and as he found them all wrong, blurted out that the astrologer did not know anything of astrology. The old man naturally got angry and challenged the lad to give proper readings of the horoscopes if he could. Ganapati studied the horoscopes and gave out the readings easily and perfectly. The landlord Ramdas saw that the boy was no ordinary person and regretted that they fed him on left over rice. He asked Ganapati to stay for a few days in their village, but, as Ganapati had good company for his journey, he refused the offer of Ramadas.

The next morning, the three pilgrims started early for their destination. Ramadas and the old astrologer were there to see them off. Ramadas told something aside to the astrologer. The old man accompanied the pilgrims upto Nandigrama village and made arrangements for their boarding and lodging in a choultry.

In that village, there lived a great scholar called Achyuta Rama Sastry. The old astrologer introduced Ganapati to A. R. Sastry. Sastry was very much surprised to see Ganapati as he had a dream the previous night that an elephant entered the choultry and now he was facing such a bright lad calling himself Ganapati (the elephant faced God, son of Mother Parvati). Sastry was immensely pleased to know of Ganapati's prowess in astrology and took him to the house of Sri Krishnama Naidu and introduced the boy to him.

Though Krishnama Naidu was very prosperous, he was suffering from ill-health since a long time. He had two wives, but no progeny. So, there was no joy in his house. Krishnama Naidu lovingly greeted Ganapati and asked him to read his horoscope and tell him what was wrong in it. Ganapati carefully studied the horoscope and told Krishnama Naidu that his ailment will continue for three more months and after that he would be healthy and get a son through his second wife. Ganapati also told Naidu that he would adopt another son. Extremely pleased and relieved of his worries, Naidu pleaded with Ganapati to stay in Nandigrama till his health was set right. Out of immense compassion Ganapati agreed to the proposal.

Ganapati enjoyed the hospitality of Naidu and made himself lovable to all and sundry by showing his various talents. He participated in literary discussions, played chess adeptly with four people at the same time. He

would recite poems in the forward and reverse manner. He could read out any page stipulated before a book thrown into air fell down. With Ganapati's various exploits, Naidu's home rang with joy and jubilation. Three months went by in a trice and Naidu got quite well. At the end of three months of illness, Naidu called Ganapati to him and told him that he had sent word to Ganapati's father and within a day or two he would arrive to take Ganapati home. 'Ganapati! You have divine knowledge. I am blessed by your sojourn in my village. You are still quite young. Why should you think of going to Varanasi now? Please go home with your father. If you wish to do tapas anytime, I will send you Rs.50 per year and help you in any other way you want. There is ample time for you to engage in tapas. Please heed my advice and go home with your father,' said Naidu.

Next day Nrisimha Sastry came to Nandigrama and Ganapati agreed to go home with him.

Chapter 12

BHADRAKA

भद्रतर मूर्ति भद्रतम कीर्तिं।
रुद्र तनयं तं गायत महान्तम् ।।

'Sing the glory of Ganapati, the son of Lord Siva, who has a resplendent form and pure fame'.

- Ganapati Gitam

Whenever any new project was taken up, Gandhiji used to offer it to Sri Ram, praying that though the initiative was his, the result was Sri Ram's. He thus used to do all work with a dispassionate attitude. Usually great ones work in this manner and whatever is done is attributed to the Will of God. Tapas is done usually with a desire for Liberation. But Ganapati said he did not desire this Liberation. His sole prayer was for the well-being and liberation of his country. Since his childhood Ganapati's sole aim was to see his country liberated from the foreign yoke. The tapas he did was for this end.

Though his first attempt fizzled out, Ganapati did not despair. Neither did he give up his object. Actually the desire for tapas increased in dimension. His father did not want to discourage him, but tried to advise him on the proper action. The father said, 'Son, tapas is sacred. Propitious time must arrive to involve in tapas. Simply going to holy places and banks of rivers and seas will not suffice. There must be God's grace. No use of getting frustrated and agitated about it. Please be calm and leave the issue to the gods Ganapati and Suryanarayana who gave you this birth. Meanwhile you start performing

Sri Chakra Puja. You know that our family worships the Mother by the Sri Vidya method. I will initiate you with the method and the mantram. You can participate in the worship done at our home'.

Sastry initiated his son with the mantra of Maha Ganapati. Accepting his father's advice, Ganapati started performance of Sri Chakra puja. This was the seed that sprouted into the grand tree of Ganapati's life of tapas.

Sri Vidya is also called Atmavidya and Chandra Vidya. The Supreme Power is worshipped as the Divine Mother and Supreme Self. This worship is of three modes – Kaula, Samaya and Misrama. The sages Sanat Kumara, Vasishta and Sri Suka followed the Samaya method. The word Samaya means 'He is with me'. This is not different from the dual concept of God. Sri Sankara describes this method in his composition 'Soundarya Lahari', The Kundalini Sakti has to be awakened in the Muladhara Chakra and taken up to the Sahasrara Chakra after breaking open the six Chakras in between. Sri Ganapati Muni got the Kapala Bheda siddhi (the power of breaking open of the cranium to loosen the power of bondage), by following this method. The method of the ascension of the Kundalini to Sahasrara has been described by the Muni in 'Guru Gitam' thus –

आधारे धृतमूलं हार्दाब्जे कृतवासं ।
शीर्षाब्जाय वहद्यत् पश्चात् इन्द्रिय शक्तै ॥

- Guru Gitam

That Sakti which is rooted firmly in the Muladhara Chakra, resides in the Anahata Chakra in the heart and ascending to Sahasrara in the head descends to occupy all the five senses. This is the Pranava form of the Sakti. May it inspire me through the name of Sri Ramana.

यातायात विहारै राधारेषुच शीर्षे ।
संचारं विदधानं किश्चा शेष विसारि ॥

- Guru Gitam

May that Sakti which moves in and out in the six Chakras and pervades everything inspire me through the name of Sri Ramana.

अवतरणं ध्यातं चेद् आरोहण मद्भुतं भवेच्छक्तेः ।
यस्मिन्निदं शरीरं भवति महावैद्युताग्नि यन्त्रमिव ॥ 1-4-10

- Guru Gitam

He who meditated on this power which ascends and descends in the spinal cord experiences this power as the vibration of an extremely powerful electric motor.

- Uma Sahasram

It was Navaratri time in the year 1897 A.D. The worship of the Divine Mother started on the first day of the lunar month Aswayujam in the house of Nrisimha Sastry. All the residents of the village used to visit the house to partake of the prasadam and tirtham. On the platform of the worship a Sri Chakra Yantra of light pink shade was installed and worshipped. This yantra is considered to be the form of the Divine Mother. That year the worshipper was Ganapati whose face shone with divine lusture. He stayed in a transcendental state during the puja.

On the full moon day, the worship was completed. After undergoing the great strain of fifteen days of austerity, Ganapati was very much tired and lay down to relax.

Ganapati! Ganapati!

Somebody was calling him in an extremely soft, loving voice. He opened his eyes and looked around.

There was a luminous form stepping out of the altar. It stood near him. Ganapati saluted with folded hands the peaceful, hefty form which looked like an ancient Rishi with a long white flowing beard. Ganapati respectfully asked him who he might be.

'I am Bhadraka', replied the form. Ganapati looked at him steadily for a few minutes.

Ganapati – 'Might that be the son of Mother Parvati?'

'Yes, of course', Bhadraka answered.

Ganapati – 'Lord! I am blessed by your gracious presence. Please bless me'.

Bhadraka told Ganapati that he should visit the pilgrim centre 'Nasika' in the state of Maharashtra and do tapas there. Lord Siva would bless him with many boons.

Ganapati was pleased beyond words and prostrated to Bhadraka, who disappeared forthwith. Ganapati retailed this experience to his father and started for Nasika on 18-11-1897 A.D.

Chapter 13

THE PURIFICATION OF NASIKA

निज विषयपरं वित्तं शिवचरण परं चित्तं।
इह जगति सतां येषां जयति चरितमेतेषां ।।

'Those fortunate men are praiseworthy who have the wherewithal to live and are devoted to Lord Shiva'.

- Siva Sahasram

Nasik is a holy place in the state of Maharastra. It is near the Brahmagiri mountain and a pilgrim centre of great fame.

When Sri Rama along with his brother and wife was staying in Panchavati, Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana approached and asked Rama to wed her. Sri Rama in a joking mood asked her to go and ask Lakshmana as he was single at that time. Lakshmana also was in the same mood and asked her to go back to Rama. Rama told her that he already had Sita for a wife and so he could not marry her. Enraged at this treatment, Surpanakha shouted that if Sita was the hindrance she would devour Sita. Sensing that the situation was getting out of control, Sri Rama asked Lakshmana to chip off Surpanaka's nose and ears. Lakshmana did accordingly. The place where Surpanakha's nose fell was called 'Nasika'. It became a pilgrim centre later on. There is a temple for Lakshmana in Nasik.

At a distance of 25 Kilometres from Nasik, there is a famous pilgrim centre called Tryambakam. The idol here is Lord Siva. It is one of the twelve famous Jyotirlingas in India. There is a big tank in this place called

Kusavartanam. Brahmagiri is the source of the great river Godavari in South India. This river is brought into existence from the world of light (Dyuloka) by the sage Gautama and so is called Gautami, the daughter of Gautama. Godavari's flow is placid in this place. Many people take up residence in this place for their tapas.

Mystics say that Brahmagiri is the Brahmarandhra, Kusavarata is Sahasrara and the place of Triputi is Tryambakam.

When Ganapati reached Nasik there was an epidemic of small pox in the place. People who wanted to enter Nasik were sent to quarantine till the resident doctor certified them. So Ganapati was stuck in the place of quarantine for the first few days. The owner of the house in which people for quarantine purpose were lodged was a lover of scholars. Ganapati introduced himself to him and pleased him with his erudition.

It was dusk and nature started to show its soothing effect. Ganapati who was imprisoned in the building, came out into the open space. He saw the moon shining with all her smiles and he remembered a sloka from Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa describing the starting scene of King Aja to attend the Swayamvara of Princess Indumati – 'Nidra... Vijahati Chandrah'.

When King Aja was on the way to the Swayamvara dusk fell. The moon arose. Aja slept in his tent. The vaitalikas (heralders) sang this sloka to awaken him.

निद्रावशेन भवताप्यनवेक्षमाणा
पर्युत्सुकत्व मबला निशि खण्डितेव।
लक्ष्मी र्विनोदयति येन दिगन्तलम्बी
सोऽपि त्वदाननरुचिं विजहाति चन्द्रः ॥

(The face of a King, the Moon and the Lotus are the favourite abodes of Lakshmi (beauty). Now the King who has slept favoured the lady Sleep, and Lakshmi got jealous and went to stay with the Moon and got some comfort. But, alas, now even the Moon is waning. So, O! King, if you wake up, Lakshmi will come back to stay in your face. Please be kind to Lakshmi). There is a poetic pun in this. A lady angered at her lover's inattention leaves the house, but comes back later. The lover has to condone his darling's angry mood and take her again to his bosom.

The owner of the quarantine building heard this beautiful sloka being sung melodiously by Ganapati. He understood the innuendo in the sloka, but out of mischief, he asked Ganapati how a husband could accept a woman who has gone to another man's house. Pat replied Ganapati – 'The Moon who was born to the same ocean of milk along with Lakshmi was her own brother and not any other man. So the objection should not be raised. When a woman is in distress, it is but natural to resort to her parent's home. The owner of the building was pleased with this explanation and told Ganapati, 'Please send your Lakshmi of poetry home and sleep. Tomorrow I will release you.'

Next day Ganapati came out of the quarantine and roamed in the town for a suitable place for tapas. He could not find any and so walked to Tryambakam. He bathed in the Godavari, had the darshan of Eswara in the temple and meditated there for some time. By the evening he reached Kusavartanam and spent the night in a poor brahmin's house. Next morning the Brahmin introduced Ganapati to a doctor who used to treat scholars with respect. The doctor treated Ganapati with due respect and showed him Nilambika Temple as a fitting place for tapas. The doctor also arranged for hot water for bath and meals to Ganapati. Ganapati spent his daytime in tapas and took rest in the doctor's house at night.

One week swept by in a trice. The doctor came to understand that Ganapati was not only a poet of great caliber, but also a great tapaswi. One day a wealthy man who was a lover of literature and himself a scholar, having heard from the doctor the prowess of Ganapati visited the doctor to meet Ganapati personally. Pressurized by the doctor, Ganapati agreed to perform an Ashtavadhana (prowess in eight fields exhibited at the same time) that night. Many interested pundits and laymen gathered to see the performance. Though weakened by a week of Tapas, Ganapati performed his first avadhana to the surprise of all. Ramabhavu's admiration and devotion to Ganapati grew immensely and he took Ganapati to Nasik to show him a proper place for Tapas.

But, after reaching Nasik, he kept Ganapati in his own house and started to spread Ganapati's fame through conducting literary gatherings at his home and seemed to have forgotten the promise to show a place for tapas. Seeing the trend of Ramabhavu, Ganapati started to search out a place for tapas himself. He found a neglected temple for Lakshmana at some distance from the city. He was about to enter into the precincts when some person rudely grabbed him and started shouting, 'thief, thief'. The man was the pujari of the temple. He started cursing and beating Ganapati. Though trying to convince him about his innocence, the pujari was in no mood to hear it and dragged Ganapati by hair to the village officer.

While Ganapati was being dragged through the streets, one gentleman who saw him previously at Ramabhavu's house stopped the pujari and asked him why Ganapati was being ill-treated thus.

'I took out the vessels for worship of God and kept them outside. I went in to bring water and by the time

I came out some of the vessels were missing. Expecting that the thief would return for the remaining vessels, I hid behind the door. 'This thief has come just as I expected. I won't leave him', so saying the pujari started beating Ganapati again violently. Seeing the stupidity and violence of the fellow and unable to bear the pain of the beatings, Ganapati got suddenly very angry. His anger gushed out unsuspected into a verse – a curse on Nasika town:

ध्वस्तप्रध्वस्तमनुजा क्षतविक्षतविग्रहा
कीर्णप्रकर्षपर्यन्ता नासिकेयं भविष्यति ॥

'May this Nasika be devastated by broken idols, depraved men and deserted streets.'

The pujari trembled at the curse and understanding his mistake fell prostrate at Ganapati's feet and sought forgiveness. Ganapati forgave the pujari, took leave of the gentleman, walked on, on the Navachuti road, saw a deserted temple and settled himself in it. He started tapas with Sivapanchakshari mantra.

As if the curse which spurted out of Ganapati's mouth has to work out its effect, suddenly the small-pox in the city became a violent epidemic and devastated some parts of Nasika. Suddenly there arose a big storm which shook the city. Big trees fell down, houses collapsed and the storm subsided as suddenly as it started. The epidemic came to a stop with this storm and the officials felt immense relief.

Later Ramabhavu heard about the incident that angered Ganapati. He searched out Ganapati in the deserted temple and offered his heartfelt apologies to him. Ramabhavu arranged for Ganapati's food which was only milk and saw that the tapas was undisturbed.

Ganapati did tapas for 40 days. Lord Siva was pleased with his tapas and gave him darshan in the form of a nude sadhu. Ganapati praised Siva thus:

किं यागै रतिदवारुणेन तपसा किं वा किमथ्यर्चनैः
किं स्नानेन सुपर्वपुण्यसरितो नानाविधैः किं व्रतैः ।
कामारे करुणानिधे पशुपते भूतेश गौरीपते
शम्भो शङ्कर चन्द्रचूड जगतां नाथेति नामावळेः ॥

O, Lord Siva! Enemy of desire! O, Compassion Incarnate! Lord of all elements! Divine Spouse of the Divine Mother Parvati! Sambhu! Sankara! He who has the Moon in his hair! Lord of the Universe! What other tapas, worship, vows, baths in holy rivers are necessary to those who sing your name incessantly?'

Lord Siva told Ganapati, 'Go home, Ganapati, you will have a son.' He touched Ganapati through one of his rays of light and disappeared.

Ganapati gave up tapas and started his homeward journey.

Chapter 14

NANDA BHAGAVATI

बृन्दारकाराधितपादपद्मां
नन्दामिमामिन्दुसमान वक्त्राम्।
आलोक्य विन्ध्याचलवासिनीं ना
नालोचयेत् संसृतितो भयानि ॥ 7-25-22

He who has had the vision of Nanda Devi, who has a beautiful face like the moon, whose feet are worshipped by the gods and who has taken up residence at the foot of the Vindhya mountain, is blessed by fearlessness of rebirth.

- Uma Sahasram

Ganapati who has reached home at the order of Lord Siva told his father – 'Father, I am not able to understand why Siva is so unkind to me to ask me to go back to the worldly life'. Ganapati was not happy with the result of his first attempt at tapas.

The father advised, 'Certain experiences are inevitable to every person due to prarabdha. Unless one's mind is thoroughly purified, tapas cannot be fruitful. There may be unknown longings lurking in his heart. God's power of delusion (Maya) may also be the cause. Some tests are necessary for the Sadhaka's spiritual progress. We cannot understand the ways of Lord Siva. For the present you continue worship, repetition of mantra and meditation. What has happened is the first step. You may think of another pilgrimage for tapas afterwards.'

Thus Sastry soothed Ganapti's hurt soul. Five months passed at home. Visalakshi became pregnant.

Arrangements were being made to send her to her parent's home for the delivery of the child. Ganapati thought this as a good opportunity to start for Kasi to do tapas. Nrisimha Sastry did not object.

The first step in the pilgrimage to Kasi was Prayaga, the confluence of the three rivers, Ganga, Yamuma and Saraswati. Ganapati took his bath in the confluence and started out to see important places in the town which were many and very interesting. He visited the Sankha Madhava temple by the evening. He kept his bundle of belongings by his side and started meditation. When he opened his eyes at dawn he saw the bundle missing. Except a brass vessel for drinking water and a little change in his dhoti which he was wearing every thing else was stolen. Ganapati bathed in Ganga and buying some beaten rice with the change he had, satisfied his hunger for the time being. Ganapati did tapas for ten days on the banks of Ganga, but did not find much peace. He wandered along the river bank hoping to meet some tapaswi who could guide him in tapas. Very much tired with a long walk, he lay down in a swoon on the bank of the river. Ganapati woke up after a while and found a sadhu lovingly stroking his head. As soon as Ganapati opened his eyes, the sadhu got him some milk and rotis (wheat cakes) and coaxed him to eat. Ganapati looked around him and found that he was in an ashram. He thanked the sadhu for his help.

The Sadhu found out from Ganapati that he was searching for a suitable place to do tapas. So he called a man from the ashram and asked him to show a place called Hamsathirtham to Ganapati. The sadhu gave Ganapati a shawl, dhoti and some eatables. Ganapati duly reached Hamsatirtham but, as he found the company of some pilgrims to Kasi, did not stay there much time.

On the way to Kasi, there was a famous pilgrim centre called Vindhyachala. Nanda Bhagawati is the presiding deity of the place. Ganapati parted company with the other pilgrims and visited the temple of Nanda Devi. The idol looked as though the Divine Mother was inviting her son with a glorious smile. Ganapati started praising the Mother –

पादं दादसि मनसे किमु? पापिनो मे
पारिप्लवाय भुवनादिक वासनाय।
दूरे स तावदचलेन्द्रकुमारि कामो
देवी प्रणाममुररी कुरु तावतालं॥

O, Mother! Daughter of the Himalayas! Thou hast always placed thy feet in my heart. I am very unsteady and full of worldly tendencies, but desire for sex is not there. I surrender myself to thee entirely. I prostrate before thee. Accept my salutations and that is itself enough blessing to me.

Can the Divine Mother reject such a pure prayer? Thus surrendering to the Mother, Ganapati sat in meditation. Strangely, his body rose three feet above the ground. As soon as he came out of his trance, he prayed to the Mother thus –

अवन्ध्य विन्ध्य भूमिभृत्तटालया दयावती।
विचारधौतचेतसा मियं भयं व्यपोहतु॥

'May the Devi who has taken abode in the Vindhyachala giving out boons desired by the devotees with infinite compassion remove fear in those who have purified their hearts with proper analysis.'

Analysis is also tapas. An aspirant purifies his heart with sustained analysis. Attachment, anger and fear are

the emotions of the mind. The ego and attachment are the causes of fear. They must be dissolved to get Self-Realization. For this aspirants have to control fear with proper discrimination. Ganapati prayed only for this and got it fulfilled. He started for Kasi the next day via Vyasa Kasi.

Chapter 15

DURGA MANDIRA YOGI

वाराणसी शुभ्रगिरेरनूनं क्षेत्रं पवित्रं भुवनत्रयेऽपि।
अर्थे प्रजानां विधृतान्नपात्रा गौरी स्वयं यत्र विशालनेत्रा॥

7-25-21

The town of Varanasi (Kasi) is no less sacred than the pure Himalaya mountain. It is sacred in the three worlds. Mother Visalakshi, the wide lotus-eyed deity extends her hands holding a vessel of food to everybody and hence is called Annapurna.

- Uma Sahasram

God's grace is not limited to human beings only. It envelops all beings, rivers, mountains and all other inanimate things. A special power pervades certain places as in yogis and munis. Just as mother earth bears with all the births, deaths, quakes, storms, floods and wars and nuclear blasts and does not lose her balance, there are some holy places, ponds, rivers and mountains in India which keep their purity always. They are chosen by yogis and jnanis for tapas. We all know the poet Kalidasa's description of the Himalaya mountain as a great king of mountains and the abode of gods. Just like this the sacred place Varanasi situated on the banks of Ganga is famed for bestowing liberation.

दर्शनादभ्र सदसि जननात्कमलालये।
काश्यांतु मरणान्मुक्तिः स्मरणादरुणाचले॥

'A visit to Chidambaram, birth in Kamalalaya, death in Varanasi are reputed to cause Liberation. But, the

remembrance of Arunachala alone gives Liberation'. This is the meaning usually understood for this sloka. But Bhagavan Sri Ramana says, death means the mergence of the mind in Atma and the effulgence of Atma is Varanasi.

Ganapati reached the holy Varanasi. As his maternal uncle Somayajula Bhavani Sankaram was residing in Kasi, he had no problem of lodging and boarding. He took bath in Ganga and reached the temple of Sri Visweswara. The first deity he praised was Lord Ganapati –

एकादलानां प्रवरं सुतानां
रुद्रस्य मन्त्राधिपतिं नमामि ।
शास्त्राणि सर्वाण्यपि यस्य कीलाः
सूर्यानपोद्यं तिमिरं हरन्ति ॥

O, Lord Ganapati! The greatest among the eleven sons of God Rudra and remover of darkness of ignorance by the fire of scriptural knowledge, which even the Sun cannot effect, the Lord of all mantras, O' Heramba. I salute thee.

Ganapati's mind went back to that time (before his birth) when his father got the divine experience of a child coming from the idol of Dunti Ganapati crawling out and sitting on his lap. Bhadraka who inspired him to do tapas was also this same deity. Out of emotion born of intense devotion, tears gushed down his cheeks. Ganapati inastantly burst out into composing a verse in praise of Dunti Ganapati.

कार्यं न मे किमपि तत्खलु निर्जराणां
रूपं न मे किमपि तत्तव कोऽपि वेषः ।
इष्टंनु कष्ट मथ कस्य करीन्द्रवक्त्र
शिष्टंतु मे किमपिनाम नराङ्गसङ्गी ॥

'O Lord! If this human form (my body) is another of your umpteen manifestations, please start moving into action. Dance. Do not be silent. May your ganas (gods of faculties) remove this curtain between us. Why are you delaying, my Lord? Please be kind to me!'

Ganapati visited Lord Visweswara and Mother Annapurna and went to his uncle's house. This very first visit to Visweswara temple gave him immense happiness and tranquility. In Varanasi, his routine was to bathe in Ganga, have darshan of the Mother and Father of the Universe and sit for meditation opposite Dunti Ganapati's idol as his father did before his birth. This routine continued for two months.

One day while he was returning home, he heard a group of scholars talking of a congress of scholars somewhere which they were going to attend. Ganapati introduced himself to them and asked for the particulars of the Congress. Vidwat Siromani Sri Sivakumara Dutt was in Kasi and conducting this meeting of Scholars at his house. Sri Sivakumar was the headmaster of a school in the state of Darbhanga in Bihar. He was the disciple of Bala Sastry who was a great scholar of Andhra Pradesh and himself a great scholar. So, eager to meet such a great soul, Ganapati went to the meeting. Exhibiting his knowledge and brilliant intellect, Ganapati won the attention of Sivakumar Dutt. Sri Dutt foresaw a glorious future for Ganapati. He told Ganapati to attend the Congress of scholars in the place called Navadweep. Ganapati wondered if he could get admission into the Congressional hall by himself and asked Sri Sivakumar to kindly help him.

Sivakumar said, 'Please do not worry. I will give you an introductory letter to the Secretary of the Congress and it will fetch you admission.'

Ganapati felt very happy to receive so much consideration from such a great pundit. He understood that his prayer to Dunti Ganapati was being answered. He prostrated to the deity mentally and proceeded to reach Navadweep in time for the Congress.

The next day, he did not go to the temple. He did his usual worship and was studying something when he heard his name called from the door-step. A sadhu entered the room saying, 'I heard through Bhavani Sankaram that you are here. I am your old acquaintance. Do you not recognize me?'

Ganapati never saw him before. He was wondering how he knew him and said humbly, 'No Sir, I am not able to recognize you.'

Sadhu – 'I am Somayajula Suryanarayana. People call me Durga Mandira Yogi. Durga Mandir is in Ramnagar. That is my regular residence.'

Ganapati – ' Which is your native place, Sir?'

Sadhu – 'It is very near your own village. Just now I am coming here after meeting your parents.

Ganapati – 'How is it that you knew me before?'

Sadhu – ' I am your well-wisher. So you are quite close to me. Do you not know Bhadraka?'

Ganapati was very much surprised. He asked the sadhu how he knew Bhadraka who appeared in his dream.

Sadhu – 'He is Bhadraka and I am Suketu. At present fourteen divine beings have taken birth on this earth. You are one of them.

This sadhu seemed to be a very interesting person. Ganapati asked him if he could foretell Ganapati's future.

Sadhu – You are a natural tapaswi. You will attain fulfillment through a person called Sthula Siras. Prior to that you will attain perfection in the literary field through the grace of the Divine Mother.

Ganapati was awe-struck at the authoritative prediction of the yogi. He saluted him and said that he would write a letter to his father about him.

'Alright. I will add a few lines to that letter', said the sadhu. Ganapati then and there wrote a letter to his father and gave it to the sadhu. The sadhu wrote a postscript saying, 'Sir, your son will be doing tapas. Please do not fetter him with family matters.'

The sadhu took the letter, wrote the address in English and volunteered to post it and went away.

The next day Ganapati wanted to meet the sadhu and went to Ramnagar and enquired for him. People who lived around told him that there was nobody to that description in Ramnagar. Ganapati wondered who the sadhu could be.

Chapter 16

GRACED WITH NECTAR

गोपालिनीवेषभृतं भजस्व लीलासखीं तां भुवनेश्वरस्य ।
इष्टं हृदिस्थं तव हस्तगं स्यात् कष्टं च संसारभवं न भूयः ॥

7-25-16

Worship Mother Bhuvaneswari who has manifested as Gopalini (Shepherdess) and who is the playmate of Lord Bhuvaneswara (Lord of the universe) and the desire of your heart will be fulfilled. You will also be saved from the fear of the worldy modes of difficulties.

- Uma Sahasram

Dasa Maha Vidyas are the ten great paths of worship of the Divine Mother. Ganapati has described about them in his 'Sutra Kavyam'. The ten Vidyas are Kali, Tara, Sundari, Bhuvaneswari, Bhairavi, Prachanda Chandi, Bhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi and Kamalatmika. Though the Mother is one and the same, she is worshipped through many forms and realized as such.

Bhuvaneswari Vidya is the fourth mode of worship. All our thoughts rise from the ether called Hridaya (Hridayakasa). Likewise, the thoughts of creation and other allied thoughts are called Maya. So, Bhuvaneswari means Maya and also Paramakasa. The Supreme Goddess in this form is the bestower of all desires of the devotee. So devotees worship her with the bijaksharas 'Om, Hrim Om.' The words of Durga Mandir yogi that Ganapati's literary tapas will be fulfilled first were ringing in Ganapati's ears. As he wanted to start tapas in a very powerful place of worship, he took the permission of his

uncle and proceeded to Bhuvaneswar the famous pilgrimage centre in the state of Orissa.

Bhuvanaeswar was only a sizeable village when Ganapati went there for tapas. Now it is the capital of Orissa state. It is called the city of temples. Historians tell us that there were as many as 500 temples around this place. In later years Ganapati Muni used to tell us that because of so many Siva temples situated in this place, it was very much conducive for tapas. The very famous Lingaraja temple with its odessy type of sculpture is the main temple of Bhuvaneswar. On the left side of Lingaraja temple, the temple of Bhuvaneswari is situated. For the first two days Ganapati went round the temple looking at the glory and grandeur of the construction and sculpture. On the third day he bought a few plantains, put them in his bundle and sat for meditation in front of Mother Bhuvaneswari.

Every morning Ganapati used to meditate till 11 A.M., eat one of the plantains for lunch, throw away the cover and resume meditation. He performed tapas like this for six days. On the seventh day Ganapati as usual opened his eyes at 11. A.M. but there was no more any plantain to eat. He understood his position and ate one of the six covers thrown away since these six days lying in front of him. He continued the tapas.

Gauri Sankar Panda was one of the priests of the Bhuvaneswari temple. He was observing Ganapati throughout this period and was struck with wonder at his austerity. He thought it would bring great merit if one would serve this holy man. When Ganapati opened his eyes at 11 O'Clock, on the eighth day, he saw a glass of milk in front of him. He drank the milk and continued his tapas. Ganapati's tapas went on like this for twenty days. On the twenty first day Mother Bhuvaneswari

bestowed her grace on him. The all-compassionate Mother of the Universe appeared in front of Ganapati with a blissful smile holding a vessel of nectar in her hands. She sprinkled a few drops of the nectar on Ganapati's tongue.

Mother Bhuvaneswari's face shines ever so cool like the face of the moon. Her smile is the source of nectarine springs. Her heart is full of compassion. Her eyes are the tents of protection. Ganapati was submerged in the glorious compassion of the Divine Mother. Ganapati regained consciousness after a few moments. He was still feeling the taste of the nectar dropped on his tongue by the Mother. So, he understood that the appearance of the Mother was not a mere dream. Her presence was very much real. Nothing was equal to the bliss Ganapati felt at that time.

The enchanting form and smile of Sri Bhuvaneswari were so deeply imprinted in Ganapati's mind that henceforth she was praised in all his glorious works. He composed many verses describing the smiles of the Mother in his great composition 'Uma Sahasram', thousand verses to Uma, the Mother.

अखिलजगन्मातोमा तमसा तापेनच आकुलानस्मान्।
अनुगह्णात्वनुकंपा सुधार्द्रया हसितचन्द्रिकया ॥ 1-1-1

O, Mother of the entire Universe, Uma! Bless us who are suffering with ignorance and agitation with thy grace which ridicules moonlight with its coolness of nectarine compassion.

- Uma Sahasram

Ganapati had had the divine experience which poets Kalidasa and Tenali Ramalinga had in the past.

Chapter 17

BIRTH OF A SON

In the context of Castes and Society, Bhagavan Ramana said –

'There are four Varnas or Castes. This is a classification of Society done as per the type of the activity of the people involved. It is a social order. They are meant as steps of development of the ordinary man. He who is evolved and ripe need not be bound by the customs of the community he was born into. Young or old, man or woman, one need not stick to them to reach the ultimate.

The first three ashrams or modes of life are for the proper transaction of the worldly matters (Gataye Lokakaryanam). They are so formed that they may not clash with the spiritual progress of the individual.

The fourth Ashrama is SANYASA or ascetic mode of life, not dependent on having a shaven head, wearing ochre robes, or taking up a begging bowl.

The first mode is Brahmacharya. The boy who studies under a master later becomes an ideal house-holder, with his noble and pure life of discipline, undergone during his Brahmacharya days. He serves others. He helps the society with unselfish and unattached attitude during the life of a house-holder. In the third stage of Vanaprastha, he seeks to do Tapas with a concentrated effort. By deep Tapas, he becomes pure like a crystal. The fourth stage of Sanyas will happen, by itself when the individual has ripened. As I said this is not something permanent, that one should try to get it.

- The Talks with Bhagavan

Viewed in Bhagavan's method, Ganapati was beyond these customs of the ashrams. He is an ascetic who did not wear the ochre robe. He was a thorough celibate. He was also an ideal householder. Home was never a bondage to him as his father was very co-operative. His wife also never objected any day to his tapas. She was a true helpmate in his tapas. She was like the wife of a Rishi. She took mantra diksha from him and herself was engaged in tapas. Bhagavan used to refer to her as mother (Amma). When her husband went on pilgrimage, she remained at home doing mantra japa and dhyana.

Visalakshi gave birth to a son on 14-02-1899. Ganapati, who had finished his tapas had a dream on 13th night, the previous day of Visalakshi's delivery. He saw a cow giving birth to a calf in that dream and understood that his wife must have given birth to a child. Ganapati visited Virajapuram, a holy place near Bhuvaneswar on the banks of river Vaitarani, and went home. The father and all the other relatives were very happy that Ganapati got his tapas fulfilled.

For one full week Ganapati was recounting incidents of his pilgrimage and tapas. In that context he asked his father about Durga Mandir Yogi. Nrisimha Sastri took out the letter he received from Kasi and showing it to Ganapati asked him, 'Son, there is a picture of you drawn here. Who has drawn this?' Ganapati looked at it and was very much surprised to see what was in that letter. He remembered to have written that letter on a yellow paper, but this was a pure white paper. The lines he wrote were pushed down on the paper and his own picture was drawn above the lines. There was also a message written by the yogi. As it was the yogi who posted that letter, that picture must have been drawn by him, thought Ganapati.

'Father, this yogi told me that his name was Somayajula Suryanarayana. He seems to know Bhadraka

who appeared in my dream. He said he was Suketu and he also knew the parents of my previous birth. And now looking at this letter, we must infer that he must be a divine being,' said Ganapati.

After thinking for a moment, Sastri agreed. 'Before you were born, your mother and myself visited Arasavalli and had the darshan of the Sun-God Suryanarayana. The names that Durga Mandira Yogi mentioned seem to agree with the Sun god Suryanarayana. Probably he was Suryanarayana Himself.' Ganapati agreed with father.

As soon as the son entered his third month, Ganapati along with the other members of his family went to Visalakshi's parents' house, performed the purificatory rites and named the child Mahadeva Sastry as he was the boon of Siva to Ganapati.

Chapter 18

THE PATRONAGE OF A KING

A king is the manifestation of Lord Vishnu. Protection of the culture of the country is his duty. A poet is a seer. He is the founder of the culture of the country. Hence a friendship between the poet and the king promotes the welfare of the land and so is very much desirable. Promoting the welfare of scholars, poets and artists has been the practice of our land always. After the advent of the British rule, Kings have lost their glory and power and had to subsist on the meager pittance of the sustenance given to them. Therefore, they could only maintain their own family and the meager retinue that they could afford. But even under these conditions, some landlords maintained the custom of inviting scholars and poets to their court and promote their welfare. Near Srikakulam there was an estate called Mandasa. The ruler of this estate was a virtuous King who used to honour poets and scholars and artists.

In the year 1900 A.D. for the celebration of the New Year of the Indian Calender (Ugadi), scholars and poets were invited to Mandasa from far and near to participate in a seminar. Ganapati was one of the invitees. The seminar hall was decorated grandly and the whole atmosphere looked like a festival of the spring. Ganapati Sastry was one of the Scholars who knew both Telugu and Sanskrit languages The seminar started in full grandeur. During the meetings Telugu and Sanskrit languages shone in full glory through their votaries. Scholars read out their own compositions and those that they have learnt. The audience went into raptures at this cascade of poetry.

Under the care of the solicitous King of Mandasa, Ganapati was comfortable and happy. The date which was fixed for the visit to Navadwipa neared in due time. The Astavadhana which Ganapati performed during the festivals was a great success and a wonder for the audience. Ashtavadhana is proficiency in dealing with eight subjects at the same time. The King of Mandasa was very much pleased with Ganapati's prowess and asked him to stay on in his court. The prince wanted to be initiated into the Sivapanchakshari. Ganapati told him to get the permission of the state priest for the initiation. The priest was a Vaishnavite. So naturally he was averse to the proposal. One day the priest started argument with Ganapati Sastry in the court of the King. As he was totally ousted in the argument, he uttered a mantra to make Ganapati dumb. As Ganapati was the manifest word itself, the priest's mantra did not work on him. Ganapati got very angry at this malpractice of the priest and scolded him soundly. He told him that argumentation is only to clear doubts but not to inflame tempers and it was not good manners on the part of a priest to resort to such tricks. All the people in the assembly were stunned at this unmannerly behaviour of the priest. The King intervened at this juncture and pacified Ganapati. The priest apologized to Ganapati and there was peace.

One day a yogi arrived in Mandasa. It was rumoured that he sat in mid-air all the time. In a semi-dark or almost dark room, he sat four feet high from the ground and gave darshan through a window only. Nobody was allowed to go into the room. People could see him only through the window. Two disciples of the yogi stayed outside the room and were recounting the glories of the yogi to the public. People came in crowds to have the yogi's darshan and offered money and material.

The King became curious. One day he, along with Ganapati Sastry went to see the yogi. They had his darshan through the window and wanted to see him personally. But they were not allowed to by the disciples. The yogi would not speak when he was in yoga, they said. Sometimes people engaged in tapas do not want to be disturbed. But secrecy need not be maintained for that. When Ganapati heard of this unnecessary secrecy of the yogi, he suspected some mischief. So, he asked the King to get the door opened. The disciples protested. The King also hesitated. But through Ganapati's pressure the King got the door broken open. There to the surprise of everybody, was a huge balance for weights thoroughly blackened with black paint. It was not visible through the window because of the blackness. The yogi sat in one of the pans and it was balanced with a heavier weight on the other pan. So the yogi was sitting in the pan at the height of the window four feet above the ground.

At seeing this mischief, the King got very angry. But Ganapati pacified him saying that the yogi resorted to such a malpractice only for the sake of food and shelter. So, he might be forgiven. Ganapati asked the King to give some money to the yogi and tell him not to resort to such tricks and cheat people. This attitude of Ganapati towards erring people made him more respectable in the eyes of the King.

It was time to start for Navadweep and so Ganapati took leave of the King. The King provided some financial help and other necessities. Ganapati along with two companions started for Navadweep.

Chapter 19

SADACHARA BODHINI

सत्यं स्वर्गस्य सोपानं सत्यं पुण्यं परं मतम्।
सत्ये रमन्ते धीमन्तस्तस्मात्सत्यं वचो वदेत्॥

Truth is the stepping stone to heaven. Truth is the greatest virtue. The wise always uphold the Truth. So, one should always tell only the Truth.

न किञ्चिदवमन्येत मनसा देहधारिणं।
देहे सर्वस्य जीवाख्यो लोकनाथो ह्यवस्थितः॥

One should not illtreat or look down upon even the smallest creature. Because the Lord of the world resides in each and every being.

आचारहीनः पुरुषस्संपदा परिहीयते।
आचार एव पाण्डित्यं न शास्त्रेषु प्रवीणता॥

He who does not follow the laws will be bereft of all prosperity. Because abidance by law is wisdom and not erudition in the scriptures and sciences.

यान्याचरन्ति कर्माणि सन्तो लोकहितंकराः।
भजन्ते तानि सर्वाण्यप्याचारपदवाच्यताम्॥

Those acts that holy ones perform are all called laws.

- Sadachara Bodhini

The eastern part of India was called Vanga country. The present Bengal is part of it. This is the holy land that gave birth to such holy men as Sri Ramakrishna

Paramahamsa, Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore and many great heroes and reformers. It is the land of learning. This is the abode of Mother Kali. Here people are ardent devotees of the Mother. The Nava Ratri festival is performed with great aplomb in this country.

In Calcutta, the capital of Bengal state there are two very famous temples of Kali. Ganapati who started to attend the scholars' meet at Navadweep visited Calcutta first which is one of the seats of Dasa Maha Vidyas (the ten great modes of worship of Kali).

Ganapati praised the Mother Kali with this extempore composition -

सङ्गीयमानं स्थल मार्यबृन्दैः
बृन्दारकाणां सरितस्तटेस्ति ।
यः कालिकां पश्यति कालकेशीं
तत्रास्य कालादपि नैव भीतिः ॥

This glorious place is situated on the river Ganga which is highly esteemed by the gods. He who seeks Kali, with pitch black hair, will never be afraid of even Kala or death.

The two forms of Kali are very much different from each other. The one worshipped in Kalighat is terrible to look at with all the paraphernalia of animal sacrifices. The one in Dakshineswar is very pleasant and beatific. Kali of Kalighat is the manifestation of time and looks terrible as though she is drinking the blood of the animals sacrificed. The Dakshineswar Kali, having been fed on Sri Ramakrishna's offerings looks pleasant and pure. But both are kind and compassionate towards their devotees.

Ganapati first visited the Kali of Kalighat. He stood in front of the idol and closed his eyes meditating on the

kind and compassionate Kali who inscribed bijaksharas on the tongue of the poet Kalidas and made him one of the greatest poets of the world. When Ganapati opened his eyes, he encountered a terrific cruel sight. A buffalo was garlanded with flowers and tied to the post of sacrifice and some men were chanting mantras doing some ritual. Ganapati felt that the animal was pleading for its life and with great pain he shouted 'O, Mother of the universe! What is this cruelty? You are the compassionate mother of all beings. Is it proper for you to ask for the blood of innocent animals? Do you accept this cruelty to animals? Will you not please give proper knowledge to these fools who are engaged in dogmatic cruel ritual?' Ganapati went and shouted at the men who were conducting the ritual near the altar – 'Please, will you not stop this cruelty? Do you kill this animal to please the Mother of all the worlds? Is not cruelty to animals a great sin? Please stop this sacrifice!' The tantric sacrificers looked angrily at Ganapati, but stopped the chanting of the mantras. Everybody looked at Ganapati gravely. All the people who were gathered there were afraid of the outcome of the intrusion of Ganapati. Ganapati went still further and standing on the altar himself, told the priests to sacrifice him if necessary to fulfill their wishes. With Ganapati's such a strong intervention, the sacrifice was stopped for the day atleast. Some of the onlookers praised Ganapati and some derided him.

This was the first step to Ganapati Muni's social reformistic activity. Till that time he was aware of nothing but tapas. In Vedic ritual only cereal food was prescribed as offering to the gods and nowhere do we see any mention of animal sacrifice. Only that which is conducive to the good of all, but nothing harmful was ever prescribed in Vedic rituals. This was the argument of Ganapati. Unnecessary dogmatic practices were the cause

of the modern derisive attitude of the public towards religion.

Next Ganapati visited the Kali temple of Dakshineswar :

सुधाकरालङ्कृतचारुचूली शिवां मतिं नः प्रददातुकाली।
यन्नामगायी किल रामकृष्णो धीराग्रगण्यः परमालुलोके॥

May Kali, who adorns the moon as a decoration on her hair and singing whose glory Sri Rama Krishna Paramahamsa got Liberation, bestow on us pure intellect.

It is impossible to destroy religion. Religion means opinion. According to the development of a human being, he comes to like a particular opinion or religion. Everybody needs a particular set of rules for practice. Following these rules will lead to the search for Truth. The habits and customs such as, strictly observing a custom of purity of the dress and cruelty to animals, which do not enable us to have an equal vision are demoniac customs which will not please the gods. As attitude of love, harmony, humility and truthfulness alone are necessary for the development of society. Ganapati wanted to set up a system of customs which are simple and practicable to all the diverse elements of the society without shouting at religion and caste system. Though many items like rice, curry, sambar and chutney were served on his plate, Sri Ramana used to mix them all into one mass and eat it. When people asked him why he was doing like that instead of enjoying the tastes of different items, he used to say, 'it is all too diverse as it is. Why should I diversify items of food also?' A glorious way of proclaiming non-duality of the Truth.

Dogmatic adherence to some custom and criticism of the same are quite contradictory. If we believe with heart and soul a certain work we cannot criticize it without

bias. We have great respect to the author and so we feel it disrespectful to criticize his work. We naturally are losing the critical outlook. If one dares to criticize, we will brand him as an agnostic. This is just nothing but slavery. Except the Vedas, all other books can be criticized. Even in the Vedas, it is necessary to have a critical sense to find out the truth. We are very much bound by the attitude of the authority of the scriptural texts that we have become slaves of those injunctions. But the criticism however must be constructive. Every critic must take note of this point when criticizing anything.

Thus we see that Ganapati had a revolutionary outlook even at the age of fourteen when he challenged the age-old orthodox customs. Ganapati compiled a text called Sadachara Bodhini with 102 verses in Sanskrit divided into five Chapters. He divided our customs into three categories – Karmachara, Jnanachara and our behaviour pattern.

Karmachara – Marrying a girl and leading the life of a householder, controlling the waywardness of the mind and living a life of worship, japa and meditation.

Jnanachara – Loving all beings as the manifestation of the Lord, sweet speech, serving wise men, an interest in hearing the stories of great men, search for the Truth are the rules to be followed.

Our behaviour pattern should be the desire for the welfare of all beings, respect for other women and keeping the mind unpolluted by attachment.

We have collected all this knowledge from the essence of the scriptures, declares Ganapati. This book is lauded even now by many scholars.

Chapter 20

THE FLAG OF SUCCESS

सुधां हसन्ती मधुचाक्षिपन्ती
यशोहरन्ती वनिताधरस्य।
परिष्करोत्यस्य कवित्वधारा
मुखं हरप्रेयसि लोकसे यम्।। 4-13-19

O, Beloved of Lord Siva! He, whose face is the recipient of Thy gracious look has his tongue a repository of great poetry which scorns ambrosia, ridicules honey and the fame of the nectarine sweetness of a woman's lips with its sweetness.

- Uma Sahasram

The Indian culture is based on the Sanskrit language. This language which is considered the language of the gods is the base of many Indian languages. When this language was shining in all its pristine glory, there were many seats of learning like Amaravati, Ujjaini, Nalanda and Navadweep. Since the foreign rule started, three of these seats lost their glory, but, Navadweep in the state of Bengal still retained its glory and due respect to Sanskrit flourished there to some extent till recently. Scholarly tests and meets used to be conducted and the traditional respect to learning was maintained. Scholars from all over the country were invited, tested and given certificates for their learning in various subjects in the Navadweep Vidyapeeth. So, it was considered the seat of Saraswati, the goddess of learning. Connoisseurs of learning and the lay people also enjoyed the scholastic meetings. To get admission to these meets was not possible for those who had not much learning. So, only

elderly scholars used to attend and get certificates and titles in those meets. No southerner as yet entered this arena till Ganapati's arrival. It was the general opinion that only North Indians were proficient in Sanskrit.

Ganapati wanted to attend that prestigious meet along with his friends. The secretary in charge of the arrangements was a scholar named Sitikanta Vachaspati who was teaching in the grammar school in Navadweep. Ganapati started to look for this grammar school, but every door looked like the door of a school and none could guide him to Sri Vachaspati. The whole place was grandly decorated and both lay men and scholars filled every nook and corner. Nobody was ready to believe that a young boy like Ganapati was a scholar. People were in the habit of seeing only grey haired ones as scholars. Their search seemed futile and Ganapati saw that his friends were very much tired and hungry. They saw a high pial in front of a big house and sat there and opened their bundles to eat the flattened rice they brought with them. Ganapati was worried. 'Why was Mother testing him? Why could nobody guide him to the Secretary for the arrangements in such a small place? Ganapati has only one solution for all problems. He resorted to it. He started to sing the glory of the Mother thus –

देवलोक पूजितान्घ्रि रीश्वरस्य भामिनी
मानसाभिधान वारि संभवार्पण प्रिया।
साधुकामदायिनी दुरात्म काम घातिनी
वीरलोक माननीय मादधातु मा मुमा॥

May the Beloved of Lord Siva, whose feet are worshipped by all the gods, who is pleased by the surrender of the mind, who fulfills the desires of devotees and destroys the desires of the evil-minded, make me honoured by the valourous!

The owner of the house where Ganapati was sitting heard this invocation of the Mother. He opened the door and saw Ganapati and his friends. He introduced himself to them as Kulabhigna, from Mithila, who had come to attend the scholars' meet. He enquired about Ganapati. 'You seem to be a scholar. This is the house I am given to occupy. Have you had your food? Please accept my hospitality', said Kulabhigna. Ganapati and friends felt happy at this turn of events. Kulabhigna and Ganapati had a good chat on literary matters. Ganapati told Kulabhigna about his intention of participating in the meet. Kulabhigna told him that he was acquainted with Sitikanta Vachaspati and would introduce Ganapati to him on the morrow. All of them had a good sleep and felt quite refreshed in the morning.

Next morning Kulabhigna took Ganapati to the house of Sri Vachaspati and introduced him. Vachaspati read the introduction letter of Siva Kumar where Ganapati was praised as almost equal to Hanuman and a verse of Ramayana was quoted describing the valour of Hanuman during war. Vachaspati understood that Ganapati was a great scholar as Siva Kumar praised him thus. So Ganapati was given permission to be admitted into the meeting Hall.

The examination of the scholars began promptly on time. The hall was aptly named Hari Sabha, as scholars from various areas were present in it. The President of the meet, Ambika Dutta adorned his seat amidst chanting of Veda Mantras. Ambika Dutta was an extempore poet. The hall became silent as he took his seat.

Sita Kanta Vachaspati brought Ganapati along with him and sat him in the front row by his side. Ganapati asked Vachaspati, 'Who is this gentleman?', referring to the President. As the hall was silent, Ganapati's question

was quite audible. The President heard it and was perhaps a little amused and said:

सत्वर कविता सविता गौडोहं कश्चिदम्बिकादत्तः ।

I am called Ambika Dutta who can compose extempore poetry. The verse was left unfinished. Ganapati took up the challenge and completed the verse introducing himself as:-

गणपतिरिति कविकुलपति रति दक्षो दाक्षिणात्योहम् ॥

I am the leader of poets, very capable in poetry. I am a Southerner called Ganapati.

The first half of the verse which Ambika Dutta composed had only two words, Kavita and Savita in alliteration. Ganapati excelled Dutta in alliteration and used many letters of alliteration. Ganapati did not stop at that. He pointed out that while Dutta was the adopted son of the Mother Ambika, he was the begotten son of the Mother. He said:

भवान् दत्तः अहंत्वौरसः ।

This audacity of the youth frightened the audience. A boy just entering youth to challenge a great scholar of middle age was audacious. But Ambika Dutta understood that the youth was really a tough fellow. Immediately, the examination started. Ganapati was given four puzzles to be solved:

स्तनवस्त्रं परित्यज्य वधूः श्वशुर मिच्चति ।

Removing the upper garment, the lady wishes for the father in law.

वत्सरस्येकदा गौरी पतिवक्त्रं नपश्यति ।

Once in a year Parvati does not see the face of her husband.

सूर्यः शशान्केन समं विनष्टः ।

The Sun is lost along with the Moon.

पिपीलिका चुम्बति चन्द्र मण्डलम् ।

Ant kissed the Moon.

Ganapati solved these puzzles in verse.

हिडिम्बा भीमदयिता निदाघे घर्म पीडिता ।
स्तन वस्त्रं परित्यज्य वधूः श्वशुर मिच्चति ॥

Hidimba, the wife of Bhima, unable to bear the heat in summer removed her upper garment desiring breeze, who was her father-in-law (Vayu, ie. wind).

Ganapati further clarified his point in mentioning Hidimba instead of Draupadi, who was also Bhima's wife. Hidimba was a woman of the Rakshasas and unsophisticated whereas Draupadi was a sophisticated queen of Kshtriya clan and hence would not discard her upper garnment.

चतुर्थ्यां भाद्र शुक्लस्य चन्द्र दर्शन शंकया ।
वत्सर स्येकदा गौरी पति वक्त्रं न पश्यति ॥

On the day of Vinayaka Chaturthi, which is the fourth day in the month of Bhadrapada, Gauri does not look at the face of Siva, her Lord, as Siva adorns his hair with the Moon and the Moon should not be seen on that day as there is a curse on Moon to that effect.

राहु स्त्रिकोणेच गुरुस्तृतीये कलत्र भावेच धरा तनूजः ।
लग्ने च कोष्ठे यदि बालकः स्यात् सूर्यः शशाङ्केन समं विनष्टः ॥

If the horoscope of a child has the planet Rahu (Jupiter) in the 5th and 9th houses (corners) and Brihaspati in the 3rd house and Mars also in the 3rd house, which is the position of wife, even if the Sun and Moon are in the Lagna, which is auspicious, they will lose their brilliance and so seem not to exist. Their power will be eclipsed and the child will be ill.

सती वियोगेन विषण्णा चेतसः प्रभोः शयानस्य हिमालये गिरौ।
शिवस्य चूडाकलितं सुधाशया पिपीलिका चुम्बति चन्द्र मण्डलम्॥

Siva was separated from Sati, his consort and was despondent. He lay himself on the mountain Himalaya. Thinking that the moon in Siva's hair was nectar an ant licks the moon to satisfy itself.

All the audience appreciated these clever and apt solutions to the seemingly impossible puzzles.

Next, Ambika Dutta cited one sloka from the 'Raghu Vamsa' of Sri Kalidasa and another from 'Kavya Prakash' and asked Ganapati to give out the beauty of the slokas in all possible aspects.

The examination was continued. Two verses, one from Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa and another from Kavya Prakasa were given to the young poet to give a detailed explanation showing all the nice points in the composition. The sloka in the Kavya Prakasa was given out and the meaning also spelled out. The poet had to appreciate the sentiment and the beauty of the verse in all its aspects and immediately contradict the meaning and next say that actually there was no contradiction.

न मृगयाभिरति र्न दुरोदरं न च शशिप्रतिमाभरणं मधु।
त मुदयाय नवा नवयौवना प्रियतमायतमानमपाहरत्॥

- Raghu Vamsa Kalidasa

स्तुमः कं वामाक्षि क्षणमपि विना यं न रमसे
विलेभे कः प्राणान् रणमख मुखे यं मृगयसे।
सुलग्ने को जातः शशिमुखि य मालिंगसि बलात्
तपःश्री कस्यैषा मदननगरि ध्यायसि तु यम्॥

- Kavya Prakasa

Ganapati gave a detailed delightful explanation of the verses and the sentiments involved and while at first praising the beauty and aptitude in the second sloka, immediately contradicted it, distorted the whole sentiment saying that because the word, 'yam' was used, the whole thing became only an imagination on the part of the woman and an imaginary emotion cannot bring out true sentiment, speaking on this at length continuously for quite some time, Ganapati stuttered at a point. He said सर्वासां instead of सर्वेशां.

Ambika Dutta was waiting just to grab such a lapse on the part of Ganapati. So, he thundered Ganapati to stop. Dutta said,

अनवद्ये ननु पद्ये गद्ये हृद्येऽपि ते स्खलति वाणी
तत्किं त्रिभुवनसारा तारा नाराधिता भवता॥

When you are speaking with so much authority on such a beautiful subject, why did your voice falter? Did you not worship Tara who is the essence of the words?

Ganapati was not much hurt by being asked to stop suddenly. He discovered a mistake in Dutta's speech. Instead of saying, 'Tarah Sara', Dutta said, 'Tara Sara' and committed a mistake trying to alliterate his words.

Immediately Ganapati countered Dutta –

सुधां हसन्ती मधु चाक्षिपंती यशो हरंती दयिताधरस्य।
न तेऽलमास्यं कविताकरोति नोपास्यते किं दयितार्थ देहः॥

Why does not poetry which scorns ambrosia, laughs with derision at honey, challenges the fame of the

sweetness of woman's lips adorn your tongue? Have you not cared to worship the Lord who halves his body with a woman?

Hearing this taunt, Ambika Dutta's face flushed red. How dare a youth in his teens point out his mistake in such a scholar's meet! He said –

उच्चैः कुञ्जर माकार्षीः बृंहितानि मदोद्धतः ।
कुम्भिकुम्भामिषाहारी शेते सम्प्रति केसरी ।।

O, Elephant! Do not make much noise, in rut. The lion which eats the meat of the elephant's temples is sleeping nearby.

Dutta again made a mistake due to his love of alliteration. He should have said, आमिषाहारः. Instead he said आमिषाहारा. Ganapati retorted with vehemence and pointing Dutta's mistake said –

समासीनो रसाले चेत् मौनमावह मौकले ।
लोकः करोतु सत्कारं मत्वा त्वामपि कोकिलम् ।।

O, crow! If you are sitting on a mango tree, be silent. Let the world honour you with the misconception that you are a cuckoo.

Ambika could not bear this insult from such an anonymous youth. He blurted out in anger:

ज्योतिरिङ्गण किं नु मन्यसे यत्त्वमेव तिमिरेषु लक्ष्यसे ।

O, Firefly! Do you not understand that you can shine only in darkness? (You are shining by picking out the mistakes of others).

Ganapati was not one to take an insult quietly. He retorted in the same vein.

किंनु दीप भवने विभाससे वायुना बहि रहो विधूयसे ।

O, Lamp! You shine only amidst four walls. If you come out into the open, you will be blown away. (Your erudition cannot shine in scholar's meets and the like where other giants of erudition will overthrow you).

Ganapati did not stop with this. Seeing that Dutta was spoiling his poetry for the love of alliteration, he said –

अपुष्पा चूतलतिका विपन्ना सा सरोजिनी।
हेमन्ते हन्त रोलम्ब निरालम्बः क्व मोदसे ॥

The mango is not yet in flower. The lotus has not bloomed as it is still winter. O, poor bee! Where will you find pleasure now?

There is a double meaning in this sloka. One of the meanings is that Dutta was struggling with alliteration and so could not compose good poetry. The second meaning is – Ambika Dutta had married a second time a girl who had not yet attained puberty. Her name was unfortunately Sarojini.

When Ganapati pointed out these facts of his life without knowing them, Dutta understood that Ganapati was not an ordinary scholar, but an evolved being, Siddha Purusha. Dutta was at his wit's end and asked Ganapati to sit down.

Vachaspati noticed his predicament and understanding that the situation was going beyond control, he got up on the dais and asked both the parties to stop calumniating each other personally. He offered a solution that both of them could deride each other's mother lands and stop further arguments.

Ambika Dutta ridiculed the Southerner's saying –

भटटोऽखिलोऽटटोपरिवार वध्वा।
निपीय मध्वारभते विहारम् ॥

Bhattas (South Indian Brahmins) sitting on the terraces drinking alcohol start sporting with courtesans.

Ganapati immediately took up ridiculing Bengalis as Ambika Dutta was a Bengali.

असुव्ययो वास्तु वसुव्ययो वाप्यमी न मीनव्यसनं त्यजन्ति।

When money or even life was at stake, the Bengalis do not stop eating fish.

Ambika Dutta got up with all joy and with moist eyes, he embraced Ganapati, applauded his wit and poetic talent. Ganapati begged to be forgiven his rude behaviour during the debate. Ambika Dutta smiled and said that those two words meaning fish 'Meena, Meena', are enough to procure his pardon.

The test did not stop with this. Ganapati was asked to compose one verse per Chapter of Mahabharata (totaling 18). He was barred from using the words अपि, हि, तु and च in the verses. Composition of any verse without the help of these words was very difficult for any scholar. But Ganapati, blessed by Mother Bhuvaneswari with honey made his mark in composing the required verses. Ganapati gave a beautiful commentary too on those verses.

It was the first time ever that such a grand scholars' meet took place in Navadweep. Ambika praised Ganapati very much and bestowed on him a grand title, 'Kavyakanta' meaning, he who has poetry in his voice. All the other examiners agreed to Ambika Dutta's proposal. Ganapati received the titular certificate amidst chanting of Vedas and applause from the audience.

Chapter 21

TARA MANTRA

भवति परा वाग्भैरव्याख्या
पश्यन्ती सा कथिता तारा।
रसनिधिमाप्ता जिह्वारङ्गे
मातङ्गीति प्रथिता सेयम्॥ 10-38-16

The faculty of the Word is called Para Devata. She is said to reside in the Muladhara Chakra as Tripura Bhairavi, in Manipuraka as Tara and Matangi in the vocal centre which is the seat of all rasas (essences, tastes).

Omkara is called Pranava or the primordial sound. The Word is ingrained in this Sound which is the base for all thought and sound. In its first manifestation, it resided in the Muladhara Chakra and is called Para Vak. Because She is the manifestation of consciousness (Para Devata), She is called Tripura Bhairavi. This Sound manifests itself as Pasyanti (the power that sees) in the heart centre (Anahata Chakra) and in the Manipuraka as Tara Devi. This energy can see through everything and so is the Light. This is the base for the thought of causation. Thoughts arise from the Pasyanti, reach the vocal centre and become the voiced Word which is called Vaikhari or the power and method of speech. In this form she is called Matangi. From the mouth this uttered word again dissolves in the ether as Madhyama. The yogis can see the forms of Para and Pasyanti in the turiyavastha or the fourth and final state.

Man will become as much wise as he can get the mastery over the power of speech.

To get this mastery of the Word, one must do sadhana along with hard study. Tantriks (mystics) get this mastery through worshipping the Mother Divine. When Ganapati's voice faltered in the scholars' meet at Navadweep, the President, Ambika Dutta ridiculed him and asked him if he did not worship Mother Tara. This taunt entered deep into Ganapati's heart. People living in South India did not know this method of worship. So Ganapati had not been trained in this method. This worship is very much in vogue in Bengal. Ganapati decided to get mastery over this mantra of Tara.

Ganapati sent his friends and followers back home and himself proceeded to Murshidabad along with Kulabhigna. He stayed a few days there, met the King, exhibited his erudition and was honoured by him. Then he proceeded to a very holy Siva Kshetra, Vaidyanatham.

Ganapati visited the temple, prostrated to Lord Siva and searched for a convenient corner to do tapas. He sat in meditation and it was already dark when he opened his eyes. There was somebody waiting for him. He now approached Ganapati and requested him to come to his house and do his tapas and told him that he would be supplied with food and bed.

This unexpected solicitude from a total stranger surprised Ganapati. Suresh Mitra was a Scholar. Ganapati saw that it was not safe for him to do tapas in the temple precincts as his bundle of clothes was opened and scattered and the money was stolen by some miscreants as soon as he sat for meditation. Ganapati agreed to Suresh Mitra's proposal and went to his house. Suresh Mitra took him home and entertained him with all love. Mitra was a poet and scholar who mastered Tara Mantra which Ganapati was seeking to learn. Ganapati felt that the Divine Mother herself must have arranged his meeting with Suresh Mitra. Mitra agreed to initiate

Ganapati into Tara Mantra, but it has to be done only through the medium of a woman. So Suresh Mitra took Ganapati to a tank nearby, kept a woman as a medium and initiated him into Tara Mantra.

Ganapati repeated this Mantra for ten days and attained mastery over it. After that he wrote a treatise on Dasa Maha Vidyas (10 great methods) and Tara Vidya was one of them. Tara Vidya is the second of the ten Maha Vidyas of the Mother. Tara is the Pranava. She bestows the Pasyanti Sakti on the worshipper. OM is the masculine form and Tara, the feminine of the Word. Tara and Neela are the names of the goddess of learning, Saraswati. 'Om, Hrim, Hroom, Phat' or 'Hrim, Strim, Hroom' or just Om can be repeated till the sound of the mantra is merged in the source which is Pranava. This is the state of attainment of the mantra Sakti of the fulfillment of the japa.

Ganapati did not stop at this. He mentioned that there is a Vedic method called, 'Udgitha Vidya' and incorporated it in his work, 'Viswamimamsa'. He harmonized both these Vidyas and gave them out as aphorisms.

मूले स्थित्या भैरव्याख्यां तारां देवीमुद्गीथेन।
सेवेतार्यो विदितरहस्यो मातङ्गीं तां गुणगानेन॥ 10-38-23

Knowing the inner meaning of the worship, I worship Bhairavi through concentrating in the Muladhara Chakra, Tara as 'Udgitha' and Matangi through extolling her qualities.

- 'Uma Sahasram'

Ganapati initiated his wife into Tara Mantra and through her many others and so he became the first person to propagate Tara Mantra in South India.

Chapter 22

MOTHER LIGHTNING

मन्यन्ते केऽपि घनं पर्वतमुक्तं निगूढया वाचा ।
प्रादुर्भवति गभीरध्वनिरविषह्या यतः शक्तिः ॥ 1-1-20

The mystic language of the Vedas describes the dark rain bearing cloud as Parvata (mountain). The unbearable sound or thunder which emanates from this cloud and which is the source of the terrible power, electricity, is called the daughter of Parvata, Parvati.

- Uma Sahasram

Parvati is the daughter of the King of the mountains. Usually we understand the Himalayan range as the King of mountains. In the Puranas we have the story of Parvati as the daughter of Himalaya. If as the mother of the world, she is the creator of everything, how can she be the daughter of a mountain? So, there must be another deeper and secret interpretation to this story.

As our vision expands the interpretation takes a deeper shape. The rishis of the Daruka forest started a great sacrifice or yagna to attain fulfillment of Mantras. Lord Siva got vexed with the method of these yagnas of the rishis as they left out the Lord from their worship and were only concentrating on attaining the powers through mantras. Siva wanted to set them on the right path of knowledge as He loved his devotees. Siva donned the form of a supremely handsome ascetic and appeared in the village of the rishis. The wives of the rishis were very much attracted by the beauty of the mendicant and followed him wherever he went. The rishis saw this dangerous situation and ran after their wives to save them

from the mendicant. Meanwhile Lord Vishnu took the form of a supremely beautiful woman, Mohini. As soon as the rishis saw Mohini, they forgot everything and followed her. Mohini disappeared at this juncture. The rishis again turned towards their wives and the mendicant. They got very angry with the mendicant and wanted to destroy him. They threw all their weapons, one by one, at the mendicant, but he remained unhurt. At last, when all their powers were exhausted, Lord Siva appeared in His own Divine form, Nataraja. Instantly, the rishis understood their mistake and surrendered themselves to Lord Siva. The Lord started teaching them true knowledge. 'Upadesa Saram' of Bhagavan Sri Ramana is the essence of this teaching that the Lord gave to the rishis. If we want to perceive the infinite form of the Mother, we have to transcend the finite and understand Her as not just the daughter of a mountain, but the universal Mother. The vision should expand from the personal to the universal. Ganapati till now saw the Mother's personal aspect. Now in one sublime moment he rose to the concept of impersonal aspect and perceived her as Lightning, the power of electricity. That is the story of Tatit Devi.

Between Bhuvaneswar and Baleswar stations, on the Orissa railway line, there is the station of Dhan-Mandal. From the station at the distance of five Kilometres, there is an estate called Dantavani. The Zamindar of that estate heard from the King of Mandasa the extraordinary prowess in scholarship of Ganapati. He wanted to meet Ganapati. So, he arranged a scholar's meet in his place and invited Ganapati through the King to attend it. Ganapati, went to Dantavani along with his younger brother Sivarama Sastry. He exhibited his prowess in the meet to the great satisfaction of the Zamindar. Honoured by the Zamindar, Ganapati took leave of him and started for the station.

Ganapati and his brother were seated in a bullock cart drawn by two bullocks. The Zamindar of Dantavani told the driver of the cart to entrain the guests safely. The cart reached the outskirts of the place when suddenly thunderous downpour of rain started without intermission.

The surroundings were in total darkness due to the clouds and the road was submerged in deep water. The bullocks were dragging their feet with great difficulty. There was no place in sight where they could halt even for a short time. All of them got drenched thoroughly. The driver was afraid to move either way.

Ganapati understood that the situation was out of control. He closed his eyes and prayed to the Divine Mother. Suddenly there was a terrific thunder. The pitch-black clouds parted and there was a terrific lightning showing them that they were on the verge of a deep pit. Due to the lightning, the eyes of the bullocks got blinded for a moment and they stopped abruptly. They were saved from a headlong plunge into the gorge. The cartman understood that they had deviated from the proper path and set the cart right on the path. He was awfully relieved. Thenceforward lightnings lit their path off and on and they could traverse the distance without any trouble.

Ganapati was in meditation all the time. He was immersed in the Mother's compassionate form of the lightning that saved them from a great catastrophe.

पर्वतश्च पुलोमाख्यः सजलोयं घनाघनः ।
पार्वतीति तटिद्धेवीं पौलामीति च तां विदुः ॥

The words Parvata and Puloma are the names indicating a rain bearing cloud. So, that lightning which issues forth from this cloud is called Parvathi and Poulomi.

शैवानां भाषया देवि त्वं तटिद्देवि पार्वती ।
इन्द्राणां भाषया मातः । पौलोमि त्वमनामये ॥

O, Tatit Devi! Saivas (devotees of Siva) call you Parvati and devotees of Indra call you Poulomi.

\- Prachanda Chandi Trisati

'If your vision has ripened sufficiently, you can have Atma Darshan (Self-realization) this minute', said Bhagavan Ramana. So this must have been a ripened vision that has seen Mother Parvati in the ordinary lightning. In Sanskrit there are 33 names for a cloud. The thirteenth one is Parvata. The energy emanating from this cloud is the electricity or lightning. This energy is in ether, wind, earth, water and all beings.

It is our custom to celebrate the birth and wedding of Parvati. Anything created must have a form. That form that is created is the Tatit or lightning. Fire is inherent in electricity. Sound issues forth from this. God Vinayaka is the god of Sound. So he is the Sabda Brahma (sound form of the Supreme) born out of electricity or lightning. Hence he is said to be 'Vaidyutagni'. These are the mystic forms of the Divine Mother and Son.

The cart reached the railway gate which was not closed due to the bad weather condition. The cartman started to cross the railway line as the gate was open.

Suddenly there was another flash of lightning and fortunately the cartman saw a freight train speeding up the railway line nearing the gate. In time the cart was stopped. The cartman thanked the goddess of lightning which saved them from another catastrophe.

They finally arrived at the station. Siva Rama awakened Ganapati who was in deep meditation all this time. They bought tickets and boarded the train for Srikakulam.

Chapter 23

KANCHIPURAM

काञ्ची रमण्याः कुरुतां गृहस्थे
क्वाणैर्मुदं कामपि किङ्किणीनाम्।
काञ्ची भुवः पुण्यपुरी यतीन्द्र
त्वामम्बिकानामरवैर्धिनोतु ॥ 7-25-10

O, Ascetic! The sound of the bells of the belt and anklets of a woman gives happiness to house-holders. But this holy place, which is the waist belt of the Goddess Earth who is famed as Sri Kamakshi will also give you happiness by the sounds of the repitition of her name.

- Uma Sahasram

Ganapati was becoming thoroughly introverted since he received the grace and understood the compassion of Tatit Devi. His meditation continued during the journey by train. The train was approaching Srikakulam station. Siva Rama asked his brother whether they should get down. As Ganapati was deeply immersed in the thought of Mother's grace, he opened his eyes with difficulty and told Siva Rama that he would like to continue the journey as far as the money they had would get them. Siva Rama understood the condition of his brother and bought two tickets to Vijayawada junction.

By evening they reached Vijayawada. They got down from the train, bathed in the holy river Krishnaveni and had the darshan of the diety Kanaka Durga. They sought shelter in a choultry for the night and they boarded a train for the station Renigunta on the next morning. In due course they reached the famous holy city of Kanchipuram.

This holy town seems to be shared by the gods Vishnu and Siva. Vishnu is worshipped as god Varadaraja at one end of the town and Siva is worshipped at another end as Ekamranatha. Mother Kamakshi Devi is the spouse of Lord Siva.

This place, Kanchipuram is considered the waist-belt of Mother Earth and the sound of the bells of that belt merge devotees in bliss. So goes the story of the place. There is a monastery, Sankara Mutt, established here by the great Advaitin Sri Sankaracharya.

Ganapati and Sivarama bought some bananas with the remaining money and started going round the city. Even though a house would be convenient for rest at night, they were prepared to spend the night on a pial of a house or under a tree and so they did not trouble themselves with the thought of accommodation and wandered on. At one place they saw a board on a wall of a house advertising an astrological centre. They entered the house and introduced themselves to Narayana Jyotishka who was running the centre. Ganapati started talking about astrology and saw the horoscope of the astrologer himself. Narayana Jyotishka was very much pleased with Ganapati and requested him to stay in his house. He begged Ganapati to teach him the secrets of astrology.

Ganapati and Sivarama spent a month in Kanchipuram. Ganapati was teaching astrology to Narayanajyotishka and Sivarama in the day time and spending the night doing tapas in a dilapidated Hanuman temple situated in between the rivers Khsiravati and Vegavati.

One day they received a letter and some money from their father asking them to come home. Ganapati decided to go home.

He told Narayana Jyotishka about his intention of going home, hearing which the pundit Narayana said, 'There is a very famous holy place called Arunachala on your way home. The Lord Siva manifested himself there as a Jyotirlinga (Linga of fire). Tapaswins like you surely should visit that place. You can proceed to your hometown from there. Please visit Arunachala without fail.'

Narayana's words of advice touched some chord in Ganapati's heart. He was thrilled by the word, Arunachala, as if it had some unknown relationship with him. Ganapati closed his eyes and meditated. After a few minutes he opened his eyes and meditated, and said, 'Yes, we surely must visit Arunachala'.

Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekhara Saraswati, the Pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham had great love for Ganapati. Ganapati was lauded and felicitated by the Acharya with his own hand.

Once when the Acharya was walking in a street in Madras, he heard a girl singing in a meeting the song –

सेवक पातक शमनं देवं
मानस वाञ्छित फलदं देवं ।
सज्जन रक्षण चतुरं देवं
दुर्जन मर्दन परुषं देवं ॥

This was a song composed by Ganapati Muni. The Acharyaknew that it was Ganapati's composition. He very much appreciated it and asked the girl to be brought to his Mutt and asked her to sing it again.

Certainly Tapaswins filled with Sattwa guna will be appreciated and treated with consideration by the great.

PART - II

Chapter 1

ARUNACHALAM

तन्त्रविदो नवयोनि तु चक्रं
शोणधराधररूपमुशन्ति ।
अर्धममुष्य वपुर्मदनारे-
रर्धमगेन्द्रसुते तव गात्रम् ॥ 7-26-14

O! Daughter of the King of mountains! Those who are versed in Tantras (the methodology of worship of Siva and Sakti) have declared Arunachala as the Sri Chakra with nine entrances. Half of this is Thy form. The other half is the form of Lord Siva.

- Uma Sahasram

This pilgrim center of Tiruvannamalai is at a distance of two hundred kilometers from Madras. It is a Siva Kshetra situated in the district of North Arcot in Tamil Nadu State in South India. As the puranas go, Siva, Aruṅachaleswara, has manifested Himself here in three forms. One form is the unmoving form or the mountain Arunachala which is a mountain of Vijnana or knowledge Supreme. Sri Ramana has extolled the mountain as effulgent fire of Knowledge. This is the combined form of Siva and Sakti. It has nine corners like the Sri Chakra Yantra. Sri Ganapati Muni says that both Advaitins (non-dualists) and the Saktas (worshippers of the power) worship this mountain. It is the belief that gods as well as angels circumambulate this hill. The evolved souls (Siddhas) go round the hill following the right side of the road. Hence men have to keep to the left.

This mountain is the abode of Sri Ramana Maharshi and it is considered holy also because of Maharshi's residence. Sri Ganapati Muni says about the hill -

तद्भागधेय मसमान मनेकमौनि, वासार्जितं क्षितिभृतः खलु लोहितस्य।
अङ्गीचकार भगवान् रमणो महर्षिः, अन्येषु सत्सु यदिमं बहुषु स्थलेषु॥

Arunachala possesses unequalled glory as many rishis live on it. Hence Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi selected this hill for his residence though there exist many other holy places.'

The distance around the hill is nearly 14 kilometres. Siddhas and yogis are believed to live unseen on the hill.

The second form of Arunachaleswara is the Lingam in the temple which is on the eastern side of the mountain. This is the single form of both Siva and Sakti

अस्तु नगेश्वरनन्दिनि लिङ्गं तैजसमेतदिहापि तवांशः।
वीतगुणस्य विना तव योगं देवि शिवस्य कुतः खलु तेजः॥
7-26-15.

O Mother! Arunachala may be called the Linga of fire (one of the five places of worship for the five elements). But thou art part of this Linga as well as part of the Hill. Can Siva who is devoid of attributes possess Light without being united with Thee?

The Puranas tell us that both the gods Brahma and Vishnu failed in their attempt to find out the head and feet of Arunachala, the pillar of Fire which appeared before them when they were both contending for the supremacy of the worlds.

The third form is of a Siddha. The Lord Siva in the form of Arunagiri yogi goes about this place giving succour to his devotees.

In the month of Karthik, a great festival Brahmotsava is performed in Tiruvannamalai. When the star Krittika is in the ascendant, a huge light will be lit on top of the hill Arunachala. Sri Ramana has described the importance and meaning of this light to his devotees thus –

Significance of the Beacon

Getting rid of the 'I am the body' idea and merging the mind into the heart to realize the Self as non-dual Being and the Light of all, is the real significance of Darshan of the Beacon of light on Annamalai, the center of the universe.

We shall hear some more points about the importance of Arunachala in Ramana's own words:-

A Muslim devotee Dr. Sayeed asked Bhagavan –

Dr. Sayeed : I have been studying the 'Stuti Panchakam' composed by you. All the verses are addressed to Arunachala. You are an Advaitin. How could you address God as a separate entity?

Maharshi : The devotee, God and the prayer are all Atma.

Dr. Sayeed : But, Bhagavan! You clearly addressed Arunachala as God.

Maharshi : O! You can think of Atma as the body. Cannot the devotee think of God as Arunachala?

Dr. Sayeed : If Arunachala is the Atma, are there not any number of mountains other than Arunachala? Why should it be chosen specially? Why should Atma be addressed as Arunachala?

Maharshi : What attracted and brought you from Allahabad?

Dr. Sayeed : Bhagavan.

Maharshi : What brought me to this place? It is Arunachala. We cannot deny that power. But we must remember that Arunachala is in the heart, not outside. Atma is Arunachala.

Dr. Sayeed : Have you read, Bhagavan, of the story of Pangunni in Arunachala Mahatmyam? He was a lame man. He became normal due to the grace of Arunachala. Bhagavan, you saw a certain Kuppu Iyer when you were in Guru Murtham. He could not walk. He was moving on his buttocks. Once he was going to Vettavalam. Suddenly an old man accosted him and forcefully ordered him to get up and walk. Without thinking anything Kuppu Iyer got up and found that he could walk quite easily. He walked a few steps and looked back for the old man who could not to be traced. It was really very surprising to the people who saw him walking. This happened two years before Bhagavan came to Tiruvannamalai. One day a miscreant abducted a young girl from her school in Tiruvannamalai and was trying to steal her jewels. Suddenly an old man appeared on the scene, saved the child and led her home and disappeared.

Maharshi : Such incidents are not new in Tiruvannamalai. They are quite common here.

Dr. Sayeed : It is guaranteed that people who live around the hill in a circumference of 30 miles will get liberated whether they seek it or not,. Everybody agrees that liberation can be attained through Jnana. The Puranas tell us that Vedanta Jnana is quite difficult to get. Hence liberation seems to be quite difficult to attain. How can anybody be liberated so easily by just living around Arunachala?

Maharshi : Siva's order is like that. He has declared that those who live around the hill will be liberated without any Diksha. It is the order of Siva.

Dr. Sayeed : It is said in the Puranas that those who are born here are Siva's servants, the bhutas, pretas and pisachas.

Maharshi : The same is said of the places – Tiruvarur, Chidambaram and other holy places.

दर्शनादभ्र सदसि जननात्कमलालये।
काश्यांतु मरणान्मुक्तिः स्मरणादरुणाचले॥

In September 1903 A.D., during the Navartri festival, Sri Ganapati Muni and his brother arrived in that holy place.

Chapter 2

HIRANYAGARBHA

जिह्वा तु वेदिस्तव तोयपूता
लोकप्रसंग स्तव तत्र धूमः ।
ज्वाला जगन्नाथकथा पवित्रा
चेतोघृतं जुह्वति यत्र संतः ॥

O' Heramba! The wise meditate on you as 'Yajna Purusha'. They perform the yagna making the pure tongue (the voice) the primal element, water as the vedi, the seeds of worldly desire as the smoke, the stories of Siva as the tongues of fire, and their own minds as the ghee. That is the yajna of Atma-Darshan (Self-realization).

- Herambopasanam

Arunagiri is the Silent Guru, Dakshinamurty. Mother Nature, understanding His silent teaching, stands as the static mountain as though She is performing tapas with great austerity. Even living things on the mountain, used to the silent aspect of Siva, remain silent as though they are proclaiming His Silent aspect.

The dynamic aspect of Siva is Maha Maya. She merged Herself in Siva and shines as Light. She is called Apita Kuchamba in Arunachala. The word means the mother who does not feed her child at her breast. A mother feeds her child with the milk of her breast and the child is sustained on this milk. This is the sustenance aspect of the Mother Nature which is called 'Anna Sakti'. Apita Kuchamba does not give this Annam, but gives the milk of Knowledge to her devotees and hence is called Apita Kuchamba. Lord Skanda is the younger son of the

Divine parents. He is an adept in Hridaya Vidya (Knowledge of the heart). He is always immersed in the knowledge of the Self and disseminates it through the great silence which is far greater than speech.

The elder son of the Divine Parents is Heramba or Ganapati. His position as the one who disseminates Knowledge through words is rather delicate. How can he act in such a silent atmosphere? It is the aspiration of Ganapati to give out this knowledge even to the ordinary. Can ordinary mortals understand this great Silence? However great a Jnani is, he still wants to worship the Lord. How was Ganapati to solve this problem? If everybody tries to communicate through Silence, who will bring it into the form of the word? Even though Eswara is Silence, He is Pranava, the word Om too. Heramaba is endowed with noble and unassailable strength to make this power of the word to reverberate the hill Arunachala.

Ganapati and Sivarama reached Arunachala at such a time. It was already dusk when they reached Arunachala. It is the custom of the Southerners to visit the temple of a place as soon as they arrive even without washing themselves. Such a visit is called Dhuli Darshan. Ganapati and brother went to the temple and stayed there till 8 P.M. Traffic was sparse on the roads. The town became silent. They begged at one or two Brahmin houses for food, but could not get any as it was Ekadasi day when nobody would cook food. Ganapati and Siva Rama were very much tired and hungry. They thought it better to settle down on the pial of some house and try to sleep. Accordingly they selected the pial of a house and settled themselves to sleep. Suddenly, a brahmin with a shining face came running and said that he was performing Ekadasi and it cannot be fulfilled if he could not feed atleast two Brahmins with good food

immediately. He begged them to accept food at his house. It was 10 P.M. and it looked ridiculous to talk of Dwadasi or Ekadasi at that time of the night. But, as both the brothers were hungry, they accepted the invitation, had the feast and came back to the same pial and slept soundly till the morning. The brahmin gave them betel in the end and they left the tops of the leaves on the pial while eating the leaves and nuts.

Early in the morning, Ganapati woke up and wanted to wake up the brahmin host of the previous night and thank him before they moved out. But when he looked at the house, to his surprise, it was not a house, but the temple of Vinayaka. Ganapati noticed the betel leaf remnants on the pial and so understood that as the brahmin or his wife were not to be seen anywhere and it was the outside of a temple it could be nothing other than a vision.

Ganapati awakened Siva Rama and said, 'See, brother, how wonderful is God's grace! We did not even enquire the name of the brahmin who fed us last night. See there yonder the idol of Heramba. He is looking at us with a smiling face!

माहात्म्यं ननु वक्तुं कश्शक्तः पुरुषस्ते ।
हस्तीन्द्रानन भाग्यं सर्वेषां तव हस्ते ॥

O' Lord Ganesha! Who can describe Thy greatness! The prosperity of everybody rests in Thy hand.

Ganapati and Siva Rama saluted Ganesa. Ganesa looked on as though he was blessing them.

Chapter 3

DEVOTION AND GRACE

भारतभूवलयेऽत्र विशाले सन्त्वनघानि बहूनि गृहाणि।
आस्यविगीतसुधाकरबिम्बा शोणगिरौ रमतेऽत्र मदम्बा ॥ 7-26-6

There may be many mansions in this land of Bharata. But, my Mother, whose face defies the Moon has selected this Arunachala as Her abode.

- Uma Sahasram

Uma, who is the Goddess of Ganapati's heart had graced him with honey in Bhuvaneswar. This name Uma is interpreted in many ways by many people. We do not know whether they had Her darshan, but Ganapati certainly had Her darshan and worshipped Her in the form in which she appeared before him. Ganapati interprets the name 'Uma' in this way – 'U' denotes Siva and 'Ma' denotes the measuring power that measures Him. So, he speaks of Her as that power which is beyond name and form. This Goddess Uma is the same Apita Kuchamba who manifested Herself in Arunachala. This Supreme Sakti had blessed him in other forms also, but the way she blessed him as Apita Kuchamba is entirely different. The various verses composed in Her praise are the evidence of this. Devotees who meditate on Apita Kuchamba singing those verses are sure to get Liberation.

Having partaken of the prasad of Vinayaka Himself, the brothers took up their residence in a choultry near the temple and so for three days they had no problem of food and shelter and so Ganapati engaged himself in worshipping the Mother all the time. He did not start any tapas here. He became the worshipper of the Mother.

As the Mother was giving Her darshan in various forms, Ganapati started composing verses in devotional ecstasy. He praised the image of the Mother in the temple:-

शिल्पविदः प्रतिमां प्रविशंती स्वल्पविदां तरणाय चकास्ति ।
शोणधराभृति सम्प्रति लब्धा हन्त चिरादियमेव मदम्बा ॥

The Divine Mother who entered the sculpted image and blesses even tiny intellects with Her grace blessed me with her darshan in Arunachala.

स्थापित मूर्ति रियं तव नम्या पूजयितुं जगदीश्वरि रम्या ।
शोणनगार्ध मिदं तव रूपम् कीर्तयितुं नगजे धुतपापम् ॥

Mother of the universe! Thy form which is so beautiful in sculpture is beautiful to be worshipped too. This, Thy form is half of Arunagiri, when praised, removes all the sins of Thy devotees.

The Vedas are the horses of Siva. The Upanishads are the end-parts of the Vedas. They bestow complete Knowledge of the Spirit. But the Divine couple of Arunachala bestow the secret of this life and much more. It can only be felt and cannot be described. Apita Kuchamba blessed Ganapati with this knowledge.

वेदतुरंगविलोचनभाग्यं वेदशिरोनिचयैरपि मृग्यं ।
शोकविदारि सुधाकिरणास्यं शोणगिरौ समलोकि रहस्यं ॥

Out of my extreme good fortune I had the darshan of the Mother in Arunachala who is the joy of the eyes of Siva, who has the Vedas as his horses and the light of whose moon like face dispels darkness and who cannot be grasped even by the Vedas.

The word 'Bhagyam' denotes the results of merits and the word 'Mrigyam' denotes that which is to be searched. The secret of life means the form of the Mother. The meaning of the whole poem is that yogi Ganapati

was blessed with the good fortune of having had the darshan of such a glorious Divine Mother.

Tapaswins do not desire anything for themselves. Their only desire is the welfare of the world and protection of Dharma. Ganapati Muni understood that the smile of the Divine Mother is capable of bestowing Knowledge and he prayed to the Mother to save the scholars of India, who are satisfied with mere knowledge of the scriptures and do not have the knowledge of Brahman, ie. the Supreme Being.

आगमविमति कैरविणीनां बोध मजस्र मसौ विदधानः ।
पातु महेशवधू वदनांशो हासशशी सकलनि कलानि ॥

May the moon-like cool smiles of Maheswari that shine in glory to fill the lotus hearts of scholars with the knowledge of Brahman, save the denizens of Bharat.

आयतलोचनचुम्बितकर्णा दानयशोजित तोयदकर्णा ।
शोणनगेशमनः प्रियवर्णा नाशयताज्जगदार्ति मपर्णा ॥

May Mother Aparna whose eyes almost touch her ears, who like the cloud, showers boons much more than the famous Karna (of Mahabharata fame) would give, has a very fair complexion which pleases Siva, destroy the sorrows of the worlds.

There are innumerable verses like this composed by Ganapati Muni. Three days had passed since they occupied the choultry and Sivarama reminded his brother of this and suggested they should find some alternate accommodation next morning.

Chapter 4

HARA SAHASRA MALA

अरुणाचलरूपेण परिणाम मुपागतं
ज्योतिर्मयं परब्रह्म ज्ञानाय मम कल्पताम् ।।

May Parabrahma who has manifested Himself as Arunachala bless me with knowledge.

- Hara Sahasram

Ganapati and his brother vacated the choultry next morning. They were not bothered much about their accommodation. But the problem of hunger had to be faced. They begged for food in some houses at lunch time and could get on for some days. But they had to go without food at nights. Though Ganapati was used to this sort of life, Siva Rama found it hard. Since it was quite some months since they left home, Siva Rama suggested that they might go home as their father would be waiting for them

Ganapati did not want to leave Aruanchala. Mother Apita was giving him darshan off and on and Ganapati would fein give up this extreme good fortune. So he told his brother that some Sakti brought them there which does not leave him. Siva Rama could go home alone.

Siva Rama protested, 'How can I return without you and what shall I tell them if they ask me why I left you here and came alone? And, you quite well know that your wife will be waiting for you with all love.'

Ganapati wanted to stay in Arunachala and find some job and could bring his family to Aruncahala then. With this thought in mind, Ganapati lifted his face to the

mountain and started upbraiding it, 'Everybody praises you as the giver of Eternal Happiness. You are not giving me even a full meal. How can you give happiness to your devotees?' In this mood he composed immediately a sloka:-

वृत्तिदानविमुखेन किं त्वया दीयते निजमनामयं पदं।
किं ददाति हर सर्वसमर्पणं विण्णिशाशकलदान दुर्मनाः ॥

O' Lord Arunachala! Thou who art ever so unwilling to give even a job for livelihood, bestowest Eternal Knowledge? Can a shop-keeper who is unwilling to give even a piece of turmeric in charity can give a piece of land to anybody?

Immediately Ganapati felt very bad at taking God to task. 'O' Lord, did I ask you for anything? Did you not provide me with food in the form of Sri Vinayaka? I begged only in the houses of brahmins in Sannidhi street till now and you have provided me with food all these days. It is very bad of me to take Thee, Siva, to task. Well, I will now ask Thee what I want and see whether Thou are compassionate,' said Ganapati in his heart. A poet asks and receives. It is not as though he is begging. Hence I will compose a garland of songs and offer them to Siva. Thinking thus, Ganapati told his brother that they might leave Arunachala when Navaratri festivals were over.

Ganapati composed 36 slokas by next evening. He took these flowers of verse in his hands and stood before Nandi in the Arunachala temple. Siva was shining in all radiance in front of the statue of Nandiswara. Both Ganapati and his brother closed their eyes and Ganapati started reciting the slokas :

अरुणाचलरूपो वः करुणावरुणालयः।
भुवनाधिपतिः कश्चिदवनाय प्रकल्पताम्॥

इहालङ्कारमाधुर्यध्वनयो सन्तिवा न वा
एको नामध्वनिः शम्भोरस्यादातुं विदां मनः ॥

अलिङ्गयंतां चित्रार्धैः प्राचां वाचो विपश्चितां।
यश एव महेशस्य भाषया मधुभूषणम् ॥

One by one, the slokas were offered at the feet of the Lord. Ganapati and Siva Rama were immersed in devotion and tears flowed freely from their eyes. People who visited the temple at that time were very much attracted by the beautiful sonorous singing that issued out of Ganapati's mouth. Tears flowed down from the eyes of all the listeners. Sadhus and others who lived on the mountain who heard these verses were visibly moved by them.

From the next day the people of Arunachala town started thronging the temple at the time of Ganapati's singing of the verses on Siva. People started to invite him and his brother to have food at their houses. Everyday Ganapati composed fresh slokas. It was a poetical feast to all the scholars, poets, devotees and also laymen who attended the programme. Yogis and ascetics from the hill of Arunachala attended and blessed Ganapati. Seshadri Swami was one of the yogis who heard Ganapati's rendering of the slokas. Mouna Swami (later Sri Bhagavan Ramana) was also regularly listening to the Stotram.

Ganapati's style, beauty and simplicity of composition pleased all the scholars and poets and elite of Arunachala town. On the tenth day of the festival of Navratri, Ganapati garlanded Lord Arunachaleswara with a thousand verses. The elite of the town who heard this unheard of beautiful exposition in Sanskrit offered Ganapati a post of Sanskrit teacher in a Sanskrit school in Tiruvannamalai.

Chapter 5

I PROSTRATE BEFORE THEE

त्वय्यर्पित मनसा त्वां पश्यन् सर्वं तवाकृतितया सततं ।
भजतेऽनन्यप्रीत्या स जयत्यरुणाचल त्वयि सुखे मग्नः ॥

O' Arunachala! Having surrendered the mind to Thee, beholding everything as Thy Form, he who worships Thee with undivided love will be submerged in Eternal Bliss.

- Arunachala Pancha Ratna (Sri Ramana Maharshi)

For Saranagathi (surrender) there are no limitations of age, sex or any other thing. One who surrenders totally will be blessed with the grace of Siva. Surrender has nothing to do with the physical being. There are a great many men who have attained the ultimate while undergoing many vicissitudes. Bhagavan Ramana says, 'you look only at the outer appearance. The spiritual development cannot be grasped by looking at the external appearance.'

This is the story of a boy who surrendered to Bhagavan and lived his life under the cool shade of Bhagavan's grace.

Many sadhus and seekers lived under the trees and caves of Arunagiri. Some were realized souls, some were seekers, some were disgusted with worldly life and some were cheats in the garbs of ochre. It was difficult to judge the true nature of these, but the householders in Arunachala used to feed them all with respect and affection.

Seshadri Swamy, who was a siddha was loved by all in Tiruvannamalai. He used to look and act like a mad person. But he had a divine touch. That touch could get

a girl married quickly, a shop-keeper prosper tremendously and a householder get all desires fulfilled. He used to shower his grace on many householders of the town. He was a worshipper of the Divine Mother.

Another yogi on Arunagiri was Mouna Swamy. He left home at about the age of 17 and lived on Arunagiri ever after. He used to beg food, receive it in his hands and eat it without having to bother about any plates or vessels. His presence was immensely peaceful. He used to be called Brahmana Swamy. He loved Arunachala intensely. He referred to the mountain as the compassionate Lord Siva and a hill of medicinal herbs. He was considered a yogi and loved by the people in Tiruvannamalai.

There was another sadhu called Jatadhari Padmanabha who had an ashram on the hill. He knew a little of the scriptures. He used to insist everybody should visit himself first before meeting Brahmana Swamy. This was the state of affairs on Arunagiri in 1903 when Ganapati Muni started to reside in Tiruvannamalai.

The peace in his presence and the shining countenance of the Mounaswamy gripped Ganapati quite tightly. Mouna Swamy used to attend Ganapati's recital of Hara Sahasram. Ganapati used to visit the Swamy often with his family, but would not disturb him. The Swamy used to look at Ganapati with love and grace but never opened his mouth. Ganapati may not have needed any communication with the Swamy at that time. He was not aware that Mouna Swamy was going to be his Guru later.

One day Ganapati climbed the hill with his wife and son to have Swami's darshan. The couple sat before the Swamy. 'Deva, prostrate before Swamy, told Ganapati to the child, Maha Deva. But the child did not heed his

father's words, and started playing at a distance. Meanwhile Jata Swamy came on a visit to Mounaswamy. He asked Ganapati, 'Sir, you are a scholar. Can you interpret the sloka, 'Suklambhara Dharam' to the description of Vishnu?

Ganapati immediately took up the challenge and said, 'Why only to Vishnu's description? I will interpret it to suit this Swamy himself'. So saying, Ganapati interpreted the sloka to mean Mouna Swamy.

शुक्लांबरधरं	-	Wearing white cloth as a garment.
विष्णुं	-	All-pervading.
शशिवर्णं	-	Complexion like the moon.
चतुर्भुजं	-	He who has gobbled up the four enemies: Kama, Krodha, Mada and Matsarya.
प्रसन्न वदनं	-	Who has a peaceful countenance.
ध्यायेत्	-	To be meditated upon.
सर्वविघ्नोप शान्तये	-	for the removal of all obstacles.

Jata Swamy who came only to ridicule the Swamy became discomforted at this interpretation of the sloka by Ganapati.

Now Maha Deva who was playing at some distance came running and prostrated at the feet of Mouna Swamy saying, "I, Mahadeva Sarma, prostrate at thy feet along", with all the attendant antecedents called 'Pravara'. As blessing those who surrender to them is the greatest virtue of great men, Mouna Swamy lifted the boy up with all love and fondled him. Later Swamy said that it was surprising how such a small child of four could surrender in such a manner. From then on there grew a friendship between the child Maha Deva and Mouna Swamy. Maha Deva used to say in his later life, 'It was simply

unforgettable the way Bhagavan showered his grace on me!'. All through his life Maha Deva was calm and introverted which was really the grace of Bhagavan Ramana. Mahadeva used to be called 'Devudanna" meaning godly person. Thus the child Maha Deva surrendered himself to Bhagavan at the age of four.

प्रपेदिरे प्राक्तनजन्मविद्याः ।

'Prapedire Praktana Janma Vidyah', says poet Kalidasa, 'Received the knowledge acquired in the previous birth'.

Chapter 6

THE LORD OF THE UNIVERSE, INDRA, SHINES IN GLORY

इन्द्रो विजयते देवः सर्वस्य जगतः पतिः ।
वेदमूलं जयत्येतत्तस्य नाम सहस्रकम् ।।

Glory be to Indra who is the Lord of all the worlds. Glory be to the thousand names culled from the Vedas.

- Indra Sahasram, Ganapati Muni

There are two types of visions – subjective (internal) and objective (external). The mind creates a thought and the thought creates the form. The 'I' is a thought, but it has no form. Joined to the idea of the body it gets a form. The idea that results is the 'I am the body' idea. Yogis can cognize this 'I' as the pure 'I'. Then it becomes its own form, say the elders and the wise. As the perception of the perceived expands he is able to understand this form of 'I' better and better.

Ganapati did not start on tapas after he reached Arunachala. After having the darshan of Mouna Swamy, his mind settled in greater peace. The study of the scriptures is also tapas. So he was actually engaged in tapas, but it was the tapas of studying the scriptures along with the students of the Vedic school. He studied them starting from the beginning 'Agnimeele' and ended with the last 'Sunahaasti'. He studied also the commentary of Vedas by Sayanacharya. Even the teachers in the school were surprised when he expounded the commentary.

The wise declare that there is a purpose to everything in this world and it proved quite true in the case of Ganapati. Till now Ganapati saw himself as a luminous body with an individuality. He worshipped the Mother in the method handed down by his father. He had the vision of the Mother in many forms many times before. But the form he is seeing now is different. That mind that sees something will not keep quiet. It starts inquiring what it is. Ganapati's mind did just that.

This thought of 'I' starts creating the idea 'This'. The Upanishads says, "The Supreme Being shines as 'I, I'. " The scriptures tell us that 'Sat' i.e. 'Existence' in the process of creation becomes the 'Eswara' or Lord of the Universe. So, Ganapati thought that this luminous form that he was perceiving must be Arunachaleswara and felt immensely happy. The secrets of Vedanta have started to become clear to this great tapaswi.

Aditi and Daksha are the mother and father of creation, say the Vedas. Sati and Siva are the primordial parents, say some. So Siva must be Daksha and Sati, Aditi. That which is undivided is Aditi (she who has no second or division). Creation happens in Akasa or ether. Hence Akasa or ether in which creation takes place is Aditi. She always exists as the undivided, which is the power called Sati or Existence. Ganapati visualized this idea and described it in 'Uma Sahasram' thus –

प्रान्तेषु कोऽपि शक्तेः पृथगात्मा वियदुपाधिसंगेन
परमात्मनो विभक्तः स्वयमभिमन्ता विनिष्पेदे ।
आत्मीयदेशरक्षणे शक्तं करोतु सर्वदा
पापद्विषां प्रियंकरी वासिष्ठ मिन्द्रसुन्दरी ॥

In the expansion of the Sakti (energy) in the Space another being appeared as a form (Purusha) with the contact of a body which possessed an individuality

(Swabhimana स्वाभिमान) and that form was Eswara or Daksha.

Daksha started creation. Brahma was called to create forms and Vishnu to maintain them. The essence of this sacrifice of creation was offered to them. As Eswara was the basic Spirit who was at the back of all this sacrifice, He was not offered the essence. This is the Vedantic explanation to the Puranic story of Daksha Yagna.

The name of Eswara in the Vedas is Indra. Hence Indra is the Lord of all the sacrifices. In the Puranas, the personality of Indra is distorted. Indra's true identity as depicted by Ganapati Muni is like this :

He, who is the support of the Sun and the Moon.
He, who is the spouse of Poulomi, the Supreme.
He, who is described as the noblest by the wise.
He, who is the King of the three worlds.
He, who is the grandsire (founder of creation) of the creator.
He, who is the prime element among elements.
He, who is the life of all life.
He, who is worshipped by all the gods.
He, who is the primordial fighter and the Lord of all wars.
He, who is the first teacher and is the Lord of intellect.
He, who is the inmost soul in every one.
He, who is the mystery which cannot be grasped by the dull-witted.
He, who lights all the shining entities.
He, who is the one species in which all species merge.
He, who is pervading everything.
He, who is the glorious ether.

He, who reigns as the Lord in the form of "Pakari"
Him do I meditate on in my heart who is the unborn,
Primordial Being, Infinite and Creator of Illusion.

- Poorna (Satya Prabha)

This is a great mystic revelation of the Vedas Sri Kavyakanta Ganapati had by the grace of Arunachaleswara. In the modern age when the tradition of the seers is almost lost, Sri Ganapati Sastry was bestowed by Arunachaleswara with the great good fortune of being able to constructively criticize the Puranas and bring out the true import of Vedas and make him shine out as a seer in the modern age. With this ability he became a real seer, Muni, no more an ordinary scholar. Many mysteries of Vedic knowledge were revealed by this seer poet.

Indra Viswasya Rajati (इन्द्रो विश्वस्य राजति) is a single line Gayatri Mantra in Rig Veda. Ganapati Muni brought this Mantra to light. He wrote many songs revealing the nature of Indra. He merged his surname of Ayyala Somayajula in the name of Vasishta who was the founder saint of their line (family) and made himself known as Vasishta Ganapati Muni.

Later he scoured Rig Veda and brought to light a thousand names of Indra and wrote a treatise called Indra Sahasra or Thousand names of Indra. Sri Ramana was surprised and pleased with this rare work of Ganapati Muni.

Either by the grace of Mouna Swamy or Aruncahaleswara, the seed of the path of Inquiry, 'Who am I?' was sown in Ganapati Muni in 1903 itself. This enquiry led to philosophic criticism and commentary on Vedas and so he became a commentator of Vedas like Sri Sankara.

Chapter 7

MY COUNTRY; MY PEOPLE

आत्मीयदेशरक्षणे शक्तं करोतु सर्वदा।
पापद्विषां प्रियंकरी वासिष्ठ मिन्द्रसुन्दरी॥

O' Mother Indrani! O! Thou who art the Lover of those who are the enemies of sinners! Make me strong to protect my country always.

- Indrani Saptasati

Ganapati did not take up tapas in hills and temples in Arunachala. His attention was now drawn to fathom the secrets of Vedas through critical appreciation. To repeat the mantras with proper intonation became his tapas now. He, immersed in this study of Vedas, was delving into the culture of Vedic times. He had the full, overflowing grace of Bhagavan Sri Ramana by this time. He brought Visalakshi and son and started a household in Tiruvannamalai. He took the 5 year old child Mahadeva to Sri Ramana and Ramana sat him in his lap and fondled and blessed him. This was the blessing of God for the entire life of Mahadeva.

Ganapati studied Tarka and Vartika of the school of rishi Jaimini. Vedas are not the compositions of anybody. Keeping the mind steady in the search of Truth, opening the inner library in the Muladhara Chakra and after delving into the material and spiritual standards of the rishis what was brought out was the content of Vedas. The rishis have thoroughly investigated the secrets of the nature of this world of five elements like the modern scientists. The knowledge of the phenomenal nature that the moderns have acquired was imbedded in the Vedas.

The Truth which is the fundamental basis of creation was searched and discovered by the rishis and their experiential knowledge was revealed in the Vedas. Hence the Vedas are the beacon lights of ever new knowledge. That culture of the rishis is the real culture of India. The fall of this glorious Hindu culture started when the Vedic knowledge which is deep and hidden was forgotten by its people. The spiritual degeneration is the main cause of foreign domination and the attitude of slavery of the Indians. This knowledge was revealed to Ganapaty through his systematic study of Vedas.

Ganapati thought that the renaissance of culture was the urgent need of the country. He started giving discourses on Vedas and Literature and through teaching righteous method of living, infused dynamic patriotism in his countrymen. Till then the general public considered it only meritorious to visit holy men living on the hills. But through the dynamic teaching of this great tapswi, Ganapati Muni, the people of Arunachala understood it a rare privilege to associate with the Muni. People, in thousands started to visit him. Some came to get their doubts cleared. Some arrived in search of Vedic studies and some to receive mantras from him.

Ganapati's fame did not stop with spreading in Tiruvannamalai. It spread to other towns as well. Ganapati used to perform Aradhanas in nearby holy places. Many became his disciples. One of them was Satanjeri Ramaswamy Iyer from Madras. Iyer was the descendant of Upanishad Brahma who was a great saint and so he was very austere and religious minded. Upanishad Brahma was very famous and popular. Iyer worked as a clerk in the High court of Madras. Very much impressed by Ganapati's discourses, he invited the Muni to Madras. Ganapati obliged his disciple and during the holiday season went to Madras and stayed in Iyer's

house. The whole family felt blessed with the visit of their master Ganapati.

As Vasishta Ganapati was in the town, a gathering of some educated people who were conversant with Sanskrit language was arranged, many among whom political big-wigs. Some students who heard before of the extraordinary erudition of Kavyakanta also arrived. As Ganapati was known to be the recipient of the title of Kavyakanta, laymen also attended the gathering. Ganapati's voice rang out, in sonorous tones describing the rishi culture of yore and the present deteriorated condition of our culture and suddenly became silent. Ganapati went introvert and sat in meditation.

The congregation waited patiently for some time. When they found that Ganapati was not going to speak anymore, one of the men came near and asked Ganapati, 'What are you meditating on Sir? Ganapati said sadly दशां प्रतिपदमयं ध्यायति जनः देशश्यैतां 'This poor soul is thinking of the state of this country'. The members of the gathering could not understand the purport of this statement. Gradually Ganapati came out of his introversion and explained:-

कुलीनः क्षुद्राय प्रवर इति दत्ते निजसुतां
अनार्यान् विज्ञाश्च प्रभव इति गायन्ति शतशः ।
बलं बाह्वो लुप्तं हतमपि च वाग्वीर्य मरिभिः
दशां देशस्यैतां प्रतिपदमयं ध्यायति जनः ॥

A person of noble birth gives his daughter in marriage to a mean fellow thinking him to be a good bride-groom; some persons are praising ignoble men as mighty lords; physical strength is getting lost. The power of speech is curtailed by enemies. This unfortunate person (I) is thinking sadly of this condition of his country.

अरिभिरध यैः क्रांता एते मुहुर्मुहु रुद्धतैः
करमविकलं दातुं धीरो न कोऽपि विलोक्यते।
क्व तव दयितास्ते ते पूर्वे धरे भरतादयो
यदजित भुजादुर्गस्था या तवाम्ब न भीरभूत्॥

O' My mother India! There is no fearless heroic person who can save you from the onslaught of arrogant enemies who occupy and harass you off and on. Where are King Bharata and the like under whose reign you were safe and happy!

Those were the days when voices were raised here and there for the independence of the country which was suffering under foreign (British) rule. In Kavyakanta, the citizens of Madras found a hero who had girded his loins for the redemption of their country. The inspiring dynamic discourses of Kavyakanta infused in them new courage to face the enemies.

The day after Ganapati Sastri's speech at the gathering of the prominent men, many eminent men came to meet him. Among them there were Vedam Venkataraya Sastri, Tandulam Subrahmanya Iyer, Panchapakesa Sastri and Rangayya Naidu who were eminent scholars. Sri Venkataraya Sastri expressed a doubt. 'I have a doubt', he said. This statement was surprising. Ganapati composed a verse extempore.

स्य तु सर्वज्ञशिरोमणि दीधिति दोष प्रदर्शनेऽपि पटुः।
भवतां शंकाः शंकरहरिणदृशोहासनवशास्त्री॥

1. This Ganapati, who is the ever new delightful smile of Mother Parvati, is able to point out mistakes even in the composition, 'Didhiti' of Bhattacharya, the most knowledgeable person, can clear your doubts if any.

2. This Ganapati who is the form of the ever new delightful smile of Parvati which can reveal the dark spots in the Moon, which is the decoration on the locks of Siva who is the personification of all Knowledge.

Two meanings shone in the one piece of art, and also there was courageous declaration of his being the son of Mother Parvati. All the eminent scholars who gathered there understood that Ganapati was no ordinary scholar, but a real Kavyakanta who is the embodiment of Knowledge. They talked on various matters to their heart's content. Tandulam Subrahmanya Iyer wanted to hear one more extempore composition of Ganapati. He requested Ganapati Sastry to compose a verse which can mean all the gods: Skanda, Ganapati, Parvati and Siva. Immediately Kavyakanta broke into verse:

जगतीधरजामाता भवतां भव्याय भूयसे भवतु ।
कश्चिदपि किंचन मपि यद्वीक्षा विदधाति शक्रसमम् ।।

जगतीधर जामाता	-	The son-in-law of the King of mountains Siva.
जगतीधरजा + माता	-	The daughter of the mountain, Parvati, the Divine Mother.
जगती धरजा + माता	-	To whom (Skanda and Ganapati), the daughter of the mountain is mother.

May the gracious look which makes even a begger an Indra make you prosperous.

With this stroke of excellence of prowess all of them considered Ganapati as their master and bowing, departed.

Chapter 8

LITERARY MEETINGS IN MADRAS

Ganapati Muni was a scholar par excellence like the mountain Himalaya. The scholars who saw a Kalidasa and a Sankara in him invited him again and again to regale them with his mellifluous discourses. Sensing his modernistic approach to things the student population gathered round him whenever and wherever he went. He was a guru to both the old and the young alike as he behaved like one of them. Many became his disciples in South India. He initiated many in various mantras. Disciples used to recount about the peace and tranquillity of doing mantra japa in his presence.

With this popularity Ganapati lost his privacy. Tapas was not possible in such an atmosphere. Most of his time was spent in frequent literary activity. Ganapati visited Madras again due to the pressure of his disciples. This time he was accommodated in the house of his student, Doraiswamy. Naturally students in large numbers gathered at Doraiswamy's house.

One student asked, 'Master! Have you gone through English Literature?'

'I have not studied English language. But if you tell me any story conscisely, I can explain the poetic excellence of the composition,' said Kavyakanta Ganapati. Doraiswamy related the story of Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'. Instantly Kavyakanta started his composition –

The story of Macbeth flowed forth in Sanskrit from his mouth in an amazing manner. All the audience were thrilled at his uncommon poetic excellence. Kavyakanta went on explaining Shakespeare's treatment of the story.

The English educated students who gathered there had perforce to agree that Sanskrit is a very beautiful medium of expression.

There was a meeting arranged in Tiruvellikani that evening under the aegis of Sri Srinivasa Sastry, the eminent scholar. The meeting was attended by eminent scholars like Halasya Sastry, V. Venkataraya Sastry and Nilamegha Sastry, who were to be the examiners in the test of solving puzzles.

Ganapati Sastry was game for anything. The puzzles were rained on him in speedy succession. Ganapati solved them all with care. There seemed to be a dirth of puzzles at last. It became a problem for the scholars to create more puzzles. Sri Venkata Raya Sastry declared, 'Vasishta Mahasaya, you removed all our problems.' Everybody appreciated his pun on the word समस्या (problem).

Ganapati did not know anything about malpractice. He once came to understand that there could be malpractice even in 'Avadhanas'. Once a meeting was conducted in Mylapore under the guidance of a scholar called Narayana Sudarsana. The competition was between a poet and a scribe. The poet was Ganapati. He was asked to describe the scene of the marriage of Sri Rukmini Devi and Sri Krishna. It was a child's play for Ganapati to compose extempore poetry. He was composing at a fast rate. The scribe acted as though he had written even faster and prodded Ganapati for more verses. After sometime Ganapati understood that some malpractice was going on and asked the scribe to read out what he had written. The scribe read out some, but they were not Ganapati's compositions. The style of the verses was definitely that of Narayana Sudarsana. The audience immediately got wild and took to task the president Narayana Sudarsana. At the end the scribe owned up his mischief and accepted defeat.

The next test was 'Nyastakshari'. Again there was malpractice. A sloka is broken into pieces, the pieces are numbered according to their position in the sloka and given to the performer one by one. The performer remembers the words according to their number and constructs the poem again. Instead, Ganapati Muni was given all the numbers at the same time. The audience objected to this unjust method. But, as Ganapati had an uncommonly brilliant memory, he could arrange the words in perfect order. To the surprise of the audience he reversed the poem and recited back to front the whole thing. The whole congregation applauded Ganapati's superhuman feat.

Next Ganapati gave a thorough commentary of the piece and revealed the wrong usages in it. The author of the sloka was Narayna Sudarsana himself and so he kept quiet even though it hurt him. Lastly Ganapati appreciated the poetry of the composition and glanced at the President. Narayana Sudarsana was ashamed by this magnanimity of Ganapati and asked to be forgiven for the malpractice. The congregation felicitated Ganapati with great aplomb.

Ganapati concluded his literary exploits in Madras and returned to Tiruvannamalai. There was an offer of a post of Telugu Pundit in the Vellore Christian College waiting for him at his home. The disciples of Madras arranged for this offer. At first Ganapati did not agree but they argued that there was more salary and more comforts in Vellore and finally Ganapati agreed and shifted his family to Vellore.

Chapter 9

INDRA SENA

शक्ता देवि विधेह्यार्तानां मवने ।
इन्द्रस्येव भुजां वासिष्ठस्य मतिम् ।।

'O' Mother Indrani! May Thou bless Vasishta's intellect in the same way as thou bestowest strength to the arms of Indra to relieve the distress of devotees.'

भिन्नां संघ सहस्त्रैः खिन्नां शत्रुभरेण
पातुं भारतभूमिं मातर्देहि बलं नः ।।

'O' Mother! Please bestow strength on me so that I may save Bharat Bhoomi, my country which is divided into thousands of parties and so is in great distress.'

Jnanis dwell in the glory of the Self after the mind is destroyed thoroughly. There are no desires in them. If some desire arises, it is fructified immediately. Pure Sakti of Indra pervades them. The qualities of peace and self control, are inhered in this Indra Sakti which radiates them through great rishis. The fact that people who came burdened with ever so many troubles to Sri Ramana Maharshi found immense peace in his presence, means that this Indra Sakti is inherent in Maharshi. Atma Sakti, Eswara Sakti, Indra Sakti are all the various names of the same Sakti. Though capable of destroying the whole creation with a single wish, Maharshis of this land used it only to create Eternal peace and harmony in all beings. It is widely known that Hindus are the successors of such a benevolent tradition. There is a place in it for both theistic and atheistic thought processes. Their basic scriptures, Vedas, are not propounded by any one human

being. The illumined pronouncements of various rishis are the contents of Vedas. This vast universe became their research laboratory and the Eternal life their subject of research. Their goal was not limited to just material prosperity, but expanded to the knowledge of the individual being. He who possesses Universal vision is most revered by them. They cannot accept any knowledge unrelated to morality. Such a glorious nation was suffering in slavery and lack of any goal under the British rule. This was the whole cause of Ganapati's distress.

Spiritual outlook endows man with great courage. An introverted mind goes beyond selfishness, becomes ego-less and attains nobility of vision. The country needs such men. For producing such citizens, we need many spiritual training centres with a social outlook. When the country was reeling under atheism born out of distortion of Buddhism and when over enthusiastic ritualists like Mandana Misra were on the rise, and extreme dogmatic orthodoxy prevailed, Adi Sankara arrived on the scene to rectify the situation. Sankara established Advaita and built Mutts to carry out his teaching and rejuvenate mankind. Likewise, now also there has arisen an acute need for the propagation of Vedic Knowledge, through Ganapati Muni. Ganapati Muni wanted to start a strong society for the propagation of Vedic knowledge.

As Sri Ganapati with divinely glowing countenance, and brilliant eyes entered the Vellore Christian College to take up the post of Telugu Pandit, the Principal of the college stood up and saluted him with all reverence with his two hands joined in the Hindu method of greeting. This was something unprecedented in the history of the college. The principal said later, 'I saw the prophet David in him'.

Religious promotion is nothing new for the British. There were biblical quotations and praise of the greatness of Christianity interspersed in the text books of the school. Indians were not much respected. English members of the staff commanded all the respect. The students who knew neither the greatness of Sanskrit nor the cultural greatness of the Hindus used to give great importance to English. Those students who knew something of their own cultural greatness were afraid to show it. Vasishta did not like this method of the educational institutions becoming the centers of religious propaganda. Educational institutions must be centers to disseminate knowledge and not to promote religious propaganda. Knowledge beyond the constrictions of religion can be had only in an independent atmosphere. Colleges must have such an atmoshphere. Ganapati was inculcating these ideas in both the teachers and students of the college. He also started to lecture on the greatness of Hindu Culture and Vedic knowledge.

Some Christians met Ganapati Sastry and said, 'Sastrji, you will know the greatness of Christianity if you study the Bible! Sastri replied, 'I have great respect for Christ as a teacher. There are aphorisms in other religious scriptures also just as there are in the Bible. They are all meant for individual development. If you are after real knowledge, why do you not read the scriptures of other religions also? Bible alone will not suffice to give you that knowledge. Are there not great commentaries in other religions? We are Indians. Ours is the culture of Vedas. It is not a religion born out of the spiritual development of just one single person. Vedas are the conglomeration of the spiritual knowledge of many, many seers. They do not contain any narrow ideology. You have come to our country. It is better for you to adopt yourselves to the tradition of this land. Instead of doing that, you are deriding us. Is it fair? We have an immense faith in our

country. Our country's culture is our culture. You are not well-advised to calumniate it'. The Christians were stunned to silence at this chastisement by Ganapati Muni.

Day by day the students got rejuvenated by Sastry's exhortions and got over their diffidence. Teachers like Sivasubrahmanyam and Sarvepalli Narasimham (Pranavananda) became Ganapati Sastri's disciples. Ganapati Sastri started a union called Indra Sena with students who were enthusiastic and energetic. As Hindus are dedicated people who resigned the results of their action to God, this union with the same ideal was properly called Indra Sena. It included in its agenda the welfare of the society along with spiritual unfoldment. The Ideology of the Sena ran thus :

1. Education must be devoid of religious propaganda.
2. The British have no authority to strangle the beliefs of the Indians.
3. Vedic knowledge must be inculcated in the Indian minds.
4. Everybody is fit to acquire knowledge. There should not be any discrimination among men regarding caste, creed and religion.
5. Every member must meditate in his heart and awaken Indra Sakti which is inherent in him. Mantra Diksha is possible through its repetition and tapas. This is part of the curriculum.

Inculcation of Vedic knowledge was the prime procedure of this society. The lessons of education were the promotion of the culture in the Vedic times, the equality of men and woman and unselfish action. The greatness of Hindu culture was instilled into the minds of the students through Ganapati Sastri's speeches. Ganapati Sastry firmly believed that it was impossible for

the country to get independence unless there was divine energy acquired by the grace of God. He used to maintain that even if independence was got, it would be unstable and acquisition of material and spiritual freedom was the greatest need of the country. Hence he drew up a plan of individual upliftment before preaching revolutionary methods. The one line Gayatri mantra 'Indro Viswasya Rajati' इन्द्रो विश्वस्य राजति was given to the members of Indra Sena as a pledge. 'Umam Vande Mataram' was their slogan. The society considered that the Universal Mother Uma was Bharata Mata, their motherland.

Many people joined this society under the aegis of Ganapati Muni. Many branches shot up in Madras, Chittoor and places nearby.

Even though this society took up spiritual enlightenment as its prime concern as there were slogans raised for independence of the country, the British rulers kept Ganapati Sastry under surveillance.

Chapter 10

DIVINE VISION OF MOTHER RENUKA

यः कुण्डलीपट्टणराजधानी मालोकते कामपि कृत्तमस्ताम् ।
निस्सार मानंदकलाविहीनं संसार मेतं स जहाति बुद्ध्या ॥ 7-25-8

The devotee who had had the darshan of Renuka Devi who has the Kundalinipura as her capital, whose head was severed, and who cannot be described by words will give up this worldly life which is devoid of any real happiness and becomes detached from it.

- Uma Sahasram

Padai Veedu is a place of pilgrimage which lies on the river Kamandalu near Vellore. The deity Renuka Devi who is worshipped by the Gods, who is the embodiment of the ten great Vidyas and who is the mother of Parasu Rama resides here. Padai means the head of a snake. Veedu means a house. The Sanskrit synonym is Kundalipuram. Kundalini Sakti is another name for the power of Indra. This power is coiled up like a snake in the Muladhara Chakra of man. It is awakened and taken up to the Sahasrara Chakra by yogis. The Sakti in this process will raise its head like the snake and passing through the spinal chord which is called Veenadanda, reach the head. It is called Kundalini because it rises like a snake uncoiling itself from a supine position. When it manifests itself in the yogis, the yogi's cranium gets broken. Chchinna Masta is the Sakti which has her head severed. So, Kundalini when it breaks open the cranium is called Chchinna Masta Devi.

In 1906, Ganapati arrived in this town with his family during the Navratri festival. As soon as he had the

darshan of the Goddess, he understood Her power and decided to do tapas in the place. During the holidays in December, Ganapati came here and took up a vow of 40 days tapas. For 39 days the tapas went on without any hindrance and his body weakened considerably. But as the Kundalini Sakti was awakened frequently, his face shone with lusture. It was the last day of the intended duration of the tapas. Ganapati was in deep meditation sitting in the temple. At midnight he had a severe pain in the vertebral column. Unable to bear the pain, Ganapati lay down on his back in 'Savasana' and started meditating. Suddenly his body grew tall like a Palmyra tree. He heard the tinkling sounds of anklets. With a sweet smiling face, Goddess Renuka appeared before him. Her motherly loving look and smile cooled down the turmoil of Ganapati's heart. He touched Her feet with trembling hands. Tears were flowing down his face. He praised Mother thus:

भाहि विविधाकृतिमती द्विजसमूहे
पाहि गतिहीन मखिलेश्वरि कुलं नः ।
देहि बहुकाल भजकाय वरमेतम्
याहि नगनन्दिनि यशः शशिवलक्षम् ॥ 9-35-2

O' Mother Parvati! Bestow good thoughts on our caste-people. Save our Bharata clan which has gone destitute. Give me who am thy devotee since long this boon. Maintain your fame which is as cool as the moon.

वारयति घोरतरपातकसमूहम्
वर्धयति धर्ममपि शर्मकरमन्ते ।
किंकरजनस्य न किमावहति भव्यम्
शंकरपुरंध्रि तव पादपरिचर्या ॥ 9-35-3

- Uma Sahasram

O' Divine Spouse of Sankara! Worship of Thy feet removes gravest sins; bestows victory on righteousness and showers wealth and prosperity on thy devotees.

Mother Renuka's heart melted at this prayer of her ardent devotee. She raised her hand in blessing and asked Ganapati to follow her. She scratched on Ganapati's left thigh. An electric shock went through his whole body. His back ache disappeared. Ganaapti got up and prostrated before the Mother. Followed by Ganapati, Mother Renuka went around the temple to the bilva tree at the back. Mother sat under the tree. Ganapati sat himself at her feet. After some time she rose, and followed by Ganapati went into the temple of Ekamukha Kumara Swamy (one faced Kumara Swamy). She took the weapon of Sakti from Kumara Swamy's hand, gave it to Ganapati and went back to her temple and disappeared.

Ganapati woke up from this miraculous vision and opened his eyes. He was lying down in the same position as he was in previously. But, there was the mark of blood at the place Renuka Devi scratched his thigh. He was overjoyed at the Mother's grace and again lost himself in meditation.

Again the same vision appeared. This time the Mother scratched his right thigh, went round to the North side of the temple, returned to the sanctum sanctorum and disappeared.

Ganapati woke up in bliss next morning feeling elated at Mother Renuka's extreme compassion and grace, and considering the bestowal of Kumara's Sakti weapon as giving of divine weapons, he returned to Vellore.

Chapter 11

RETIREMENT

किन्नु सुकृतं मया कृत मखिलेश्वरि किं तपस्तप्तं ।
क्रीडयसि मां प्रतिक्षणमानंदसुधावन्तः ॥ 4-14-12

'O' Empress of All! What merit have I acquired and what austerities have I performed that Thou hast been making me swim in the ocean of Bliss?'

- Uma Sahasram

Getting the vision of Renuka, the Goddess of all mantras, Ganapati became the master of all mantras. Mother who, in the forms of Bhuvaneswari, Tara, Nanda Devi, Kali and others, had blessed Ganapati in the form of Renuka, made the Kundalini rise in him and made him swim in the ocean of Bliss incessantly. She became a ready-responding goddess to him. Till then she was responding to the call of the members of his family. As it was the father Nrisimha Sastry who gave him mantra, taught Śri Vidya and made Ganapati receive the grace of the Mother of the Universe Ganapati considered and revered him as his guru.

We must consider here that the words of Sri Ramana, 'You do tapas and Eswara will appear and tell you to know thyself', are relevant. Ganapati who was a master of mantras had arrived at the stage of getting mastery over tapas also. The meaning of mother's bestowal of the Sakti weapon to Ganapati was just that and Ganapati promptly grasped Her divine intention.

Kumara Swamy is the younger son of the Divine couple Parvati and Parameswara, say the Puranas. The

Vedas describe him as Vaiswanara and Guha. Vaiswanara is the one who pervades all beings and Guha is one who resides in the cave of the heart. The Gita declares अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः (Being the fire that pervades all beings I digest the four kinds of food) and this meaning is inhered in this quotation. He, who knows himself knows everything. In the context of the confused state of India, the propagation of this inherent truth is much needed. Ganapati's wish was also this. Adi Sankara's teaching was also to the same purpose. Renuka pointed out the importance of such a guru. Durga Mandira Yogi who appeared in Kasi also hinted that Ganapati's purpose will be fulfilled by one called 'Sthula Siras'. He, who is steady in his heart will have a big head (Sthula Siras). Hence all these incidents pointed to the darshan of a great yogi who was the incarnation of Kumarswamy or Guha.

The pointers were all in good order. But the problem was the knowledge of the procedure. How and where should one search? Ganapati who was a master of mantras was not a fool. So he left the burden of the matter on Renuka Mata and went on with his teaching work as usual. In the third quarter of the night on 2-11-1907, Ganapati had a strange vision which made him tremble. Ganapati was lying down in the mood of meditation on the grace of the divine Mother. A white-robed gentleman appeared and saying, 'I am giving up my body. You have to take up the job of the welfare of the country after me. So get up and start tapo-yatra', disappeared.

The next day the newspapers published the death of Colonel Alcot of the Theosophical Society. Colonel Alcot was born in America. He was influenced by the Indian philosophic thought and coming to India in 1878 started

the Theosophical Society. Ganapati believed that he was one of the chosen men born for promoting the welfare of the human race.

इतरो भाग्यशाली रमणीयैः प्रसंगैः ।
वितनोति स्वजातिं जगति श्रेष्ठनीतिम् ॥

Another fortunate person (Colonel Alcot) lifts up the moral stature of the nation through delivering ennobling speeches.

- Indrani Sapta Sati

Some students belonging to Indra Sena stopped attending schools and started unhealthy activities. The parents of these students were worried and complained to the principal of the college against Ganapati. Taking into consideration these complaints, the Principal of the College Mr Harris warned Ganapati. As though waiting for such an opputunity, Ganapati immediatey resigned his job.

Visalakshi was pregnant at that time. After the darshan of Mother Renuka, Visalakshi also was looking like a Yogini. Ganapati referred to her as 'Bhagavati Visalakshi', ie. Goddess Visalakshi. Ganapati intended to go to Arunachalam for tapas and wanted to convey the intention smoothly. He said, 'Visala! in a soft endearing tone. Visalakshi opened her eyes and looked at her husband.

Ganapati - I am again inspired to do tapas. I have resigned the job. I have decided to go to Arunachala. I want your permission.

Visala – (With a jubilant face) Alright, Sir, please yourself.

Ganapati – You had better go to Kaluva Rai with our son.

Visala – No. I am able to meditate peacefully here. We will remain here till you return.

Subrahmanya Sastry and Kalyana Rama Sastry were two brothers related to Satanjeri Ramaswamy Iyer. They were staying in Ganapati's house and studying under him. Subrahmanya was called Appu Sastry and was treated by Ganaapti and wife as their own son. They used to consider him as their adopted son, with the result that both the families became very close. Ganapati told Appu Sastri to look after the welfare of the family and wrote a letter to his father, Nrisimha Sastry to send some money monthly for the maintenance of Visalakshi and children. Thus he settled the family matters to the satisfaction of everybody and started to Arunachala to do tapas.

Chapter 12

MOBILITY OF THE IMMOBILE

करुणामृतपूर्णसुधाजलधिः । स्मरणादरुणाचलः ॥

Brahmotsava festival has started in Arunachala. Representing the manifestation of Siva as Jyotirlinga (lingam of fire), this festival is celebrated for ten days every year. The day when the star Krittika is in the ascendant in the month of Kartika is the tenth day of the festival. On that day a beacon of fire is lit on the crest of the mountain Arunagiri, at 6 P.M.

The deity Arunachaleswara of the temple in Tiruvannamalai is ensconced in the big chariot of the temple and is led through the streets surrounding the temple on one of these days. The citizens of Tiruvannamalai gather in huge crowds to have the glorious darshan of God Arunachaleswara, who is static as a mountain, and moving as the deity of the temple. The whole town is decorated and shines with festive atmosphere like Kailas on the earth.

Ganapati reached Arunachalam and after visiting the Lord and Mother of the world in the temple planned to do tapas in the temple of the care-taker deity of the town, Marakata Syamalamba. He requested his friend Vasudeva Sastri to assist him in the tapas. Sastri agreed to look after his physical needs.

On the first day of Ganapati's tapas he heard the sound of anklets at midnight from the temple of Syamalamba. It was perhaps the time when Lord Siva as Nataraja performs his dance. Sri Ramana Maharshi described this scene of Siva's dance – 'Though it is His

nature to be still, Siva dances in Kanaka Sabha in Chidambaram, while Parvati, the daughter of an immobile mountain looks on at His Power. In Arunachala, while Siva stands still, Parvati merges in Him and remains still'.

Ganapati was viewing in his mind this glorious dance of the Lord and was immersed in bliss. Suddenly the sound of the dance stopped. Demonic laughter and hideous dance started. 'Oh Lord! What an awful condition is prevailing in India. It is just to counter such a situation that I have started tapas. These demonic forces are destroying the country of the glorious tradition of Vedic culture where the Divine couple dance in Bliss. So, these forces are still following me, thought Ganapati and prayed to Mother Syamalamba.

उक्षराजवाहनस्य जीविता द्वरीयसी
पक्षिराजवाहनादिवर्ण्यमानवैभवा।
केकिलोकचक्रवर्तिवाहनेन पुत्रिणी
वारणारिसार्वभौमवाहना गतिर्मम॥ 9-35-4

'May Mother Durga, who is the Beloved of Siva who rides the bull, who is praised by Vishnu whose vehicle is the eagle, and other Gods; She who is the mother of Kumara whose vehicle is the peacock and She who rides the lion, which is the enemy of the elephant, be my refuge!'

Ganapati wanted to change the venue of tapas. The next day he reached the South-Western side of the mountain Arunagiri where there is a small temple called Nirruti Lingam. He settled himself there in a small room and started tapas. It was the seventh day of the Brahmotsava to Arunachaleswara. Arunachala started going round the town on his great chariot. It reached the choultry on the South side of the temple. It was the same choultry which gave refuge to Ganapati and his brother

when they reached Arunachala in the first instance. The Ganapati temple which gave them shelter and food was nearby. Perhaps the Lord remembered his elder son! The chariot bearing the Lord stopped in the middle of the town. The citizens tried their utmost to move it. But the chariot would not move. There was no visible cause for the immobility. Special worship and bhajans were of no avail. The whole town got frightened and worried. Some surmised that some untoward incident might have happened. Some said some holy person might have been ill-treated and some were afraid that an unknown calamity was impending.

It was 10 O'Clock in the night. Helpless, the priests got down the chariot and went home. The chariot was left in the middle of the street and everyone turned homeward.

Ganapati was in deep meditation in the small room at Nirruti Lingam temple. Suddenly, a form appeared before Ganapati. It was the Chief priest of Arunachaleswara temple. He said, 'Acharya! God is calling you. The chariot got stuck. It will not move until you come and have darshan of the Lord'. Ganapati opened his eyes. There was nobody about. So he closed his eyes. Again he heard a voice as if from nowhere. 'Ganapati! God is calling you, get up'.' Ganapati understood the order of the Lord. He immediately rose and reached the place where the chariot got stuck. He inquired about the trouble and as it was not the proper time to move the chariot, he went back to Nairuti Lingam.

किं यागै रतिदारुणेन तपसा किं वा किमभ्यर्चनैः
किं स्नानेन सुपर्वपुण्यसरितो नानाविधैः किं व्रतैः ।
कामारे करुणानिधे पशुपते भूतेश गौरीपते
शम्भो शंकर चंद्रचूड जगतां नाथेति नामावली ॥

O' Lord, Siva! The repetition of any of Thy names, Sambhu, Sankara, Chandrachuda, Jagannadha, Pasupati, Bhutesa, Gauripati and others gives all prosperity and Eternal Bliss. What will sacrifices, severe austerities, baths in holy rivers and vows avail?

Ganapati, thus repeating the Lord's name, reached the chariot by early morning of the next day, climbed up the chariot and touched Lord Arunachala's feet. As though God accepted his prayer, a flower from Arunachala's feet fell on Ganapati's head. There was no end to Ganapati's joy. His whole body trembled with emotion. His voice got stuck in the throat. Tears flowed down his cheeks. Ganapati told the citizens of the town, 'God has blessed us. No more fear for us. Start the chariot', and he himself joined them. The immovable chariot of the previous night moved smoothly without any hitch. Joy reigned everywhere at this miracle. 'Glory be to God' was the cry of the crowd that witnessed the episode.

The people immediately surrounded Ganapati who was the cause of this miracle. But the devotional fervour of Ganapati had not subsided. He avoided the crowd and in great speed ran up the hill to reach Virupaksha cave. It was 2 P.M. by the time he reached the cave. Mouna Swamy was sitting on a rock outside the cave smiling as though he was expecting Ganapati. With the darshan of that peaceful, pure, steady face emanating cool light like the moon, Ganapati's emotion subsided. He remembered the vision of Renuka giving him the divine weapon. He saw one-faced Kumara Swamy in the Mouna Swamy. 'This is Sthula Siras who can provide tapas-siddhi to you', rang the words of Durga Mandira Yogi in his mind. At once humility, and obedience, possessed him. They are the qualities of total surrender of the soul to the guru. Ganapti stood on his knees, took Mouna Swamy's feet in his hands, the right foot with the right hand and the left foot with the left and with total surrender said –

'I have read all the sastras, performed japa of various famous mantras, observed many austerities and did penances. Yet I have had no realization. Please instruct me. I take refuge in thee.'

Mouna Swamy immediately recognized the great scholar Kavyakanta Ganapati Sastri who sang Hara Sahasra in the temple. Swamy, who was in mounam (Silence) for some years spoke. The unmoving chariot of speech of the Swamy moved. He put his hand on Ganapati's head.

Oh! How glorious time is! Oh! How great is Arunachala who brought about the meeting of two great souls together! That was the day when the fame of Ramana's knowledge started rising. It was 18-11-1907 (Kartika Sukla chaturdasi with the star Aswini in the ascendant, Monday), the day to be etched in golden letters in the history of India!

Chapter 13

THE GURU'S TEACHING

वंदे श्रीरमणर्षे राचार्यस्य पदाब्जम् ।
यो मेऽदर्शयदीशं भांतं ध्वांत मतीत्य ।।

- Sri Ramana Chatwarimsat

'I bow to the guru Ramana who showed me the Lord Siva, who shines beyond darkness of ignorance.'

Kurukshetra was the place where the Bhagawad Gita was sung. The guru was the Lord Krishna and Arjuna was the recipient, sishya. Ramanopadesa was disseminated on the Arunachala Hill. While Ramana Maharshi was the Acharya, the sishya was the great scholar Kavyakanta Ganapati Sastri. The two teachings were given out when the land of Bharata was in critical times. When evil forces were raising their hoods and spewing poison on Truth and righteousness, Vasudeva took up the reins to subjugate evil and uplift righteousness and waited till all the forces of good and evil were standing abreast to fight to the last and taught Gita Jnana to Arjuna who was the symbol of mankind. Likewise at the time when Sri Ramana Maharshi started teaching the direct path the Hindu race was steeped in foolish orthodoxy and moving away from the secret knowledge of the Self. It was reeling under the British rule. Ganapati Muni described the advent of Sri Ramana Maharshi on such a scene like this –

अधुना त्वं महाभाग ब्रह्मज्ञानस्य गुप्तये ।
शास्त्रज्ञानेन संत्रृप्तैः निरुद्धस्यागतो धराम् ।।

'O, Great one! Thou hast manifested thyself to save those who are satisfied with only intellectual grasp of scriptural texts by bestowing on them true knowledge of the Self.'

- Ramana Gita

A devotee called Siva Prakasam Pillai approached Mouna Swamy in 1902 and asked for clarification of certain doubts. Swami seemed to have spoken to him. Though he was in mounam, he seemed to have spoken a few words with some persons now and then. But Ganapati Muni's advent brought a thorough change in Mouna Swamy. He was brought nearer to mankind. Swamy gave up his silence and was ready to dissemble spiritual knowledge to those who approached him.

Mouna Swamy blessed Kavyakanta and taught him with ever so soft words the essence of tapas. Ganapati's heart was filled with unparalleled joy. Sitting in Virupaksha cave, he meditated on this superb teaching of his master and rendered it in Sanskrit sloka for the benefit of mankind.

अहमहमिति कुत आयातीति विचारयन्नुदयस्थाने लीनं मनः तदेव तपः ।
जप्यमानस्य मन्त्रस्य ध्वनिः कुत उदेतीति विचारयन् उदयस्थाने
लीनं भवेत् मनः तदेव तपः ॥

'Searching for the place where the thought 'I', 'I' rises, the mind subsides in that place. That is tapas. In repeating the mantra, the search for the starting point of the sound of the mantra makes the mind subside. That is tapas'.

This teaching can be followed by everybody. Ganapati had declared that mantra japa was also done by him. Hence Mouna Swamy's teaching is for both the Self-enquiry and mantra japa methods.

Ganapati knew from the beginning that Mouna Swamy was an incarnation. He asked Palani Swamy who

was serving Mouna Swamy what the name of the Swamy was. 'I do not know, but he was called Venkata Raman in his previous state (Poorva Ashram). He wrote it down on paper when some one asked for his name', said Palani Swamy.

Ganapati Muni re-formed the name and said because he had proclaimed the Truth, he must be called Maharshi. So, Mouna Swamy was thenceforth came to be known as Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi by one and all.

When Ganapati Sastri was staying with Bhagavan, Bhagavan started to call him 'Nayana'. Nayana can mean both father and child. Bhagavan used to refer to even monkeys in a respectful way. So when Ganapati Muni objected to Bhagavan's addressing him respectfully, Bhagavan thought of addressing him as Nayana which could be used both towards a father and a child. Srimati P Visalakshi wrote in her work Vasishta Vijayam that this word Nayana was a part of the Vasudeva Ashtakshari Mantra. She also said that when Ganapati Muni held Bhagavan's feet and pulled them a little, the life force in Bhagavan which was in a dormant condition woke up and uttered 'Nayana'.

आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वै नरसूनवः ।
अयनं तस्य ताः पूर्वं तस्मान्नारायणस्स्मृतः ॥

Nara means water. Ayana Means residence. The superficial meaning of Narayana means thus he who resides in water (water of life). The mystic meaning of Nara is the body which is the totality of all the moving and unmoving forms of creation. Ayana means he who controls and pervades everything. So the meaning of Narayana is the All-Prevading Being.

Knowledge is the quality of an ascetic. The tapas done with surrender and devoid of any desire for the fruits of the work done purifies the mind and leads one

to liberation. In this sense Sri Ramana, who was the partial incarnation of Skanda or Kumara Swamy, recognized Ganapati who is the commander of creation, protection and destruction principles referred to him as Vishnu, whose name was Narayana. Nayana were the three letters inhered in Na ra ya na. This word Nayana means the God Vinayaka in the Tamil language. In the Ashtakshari Mantra, 'Om Namo Na ra ya na ya', the letters ra, ma, na can be conjoined to make the name Ramana. So the names of both Ramana and Nayana are culled from the Ashtakshari Mantra. The two names have remained in history as famous as Krishna and Arjuna.

Chapter 14

A GOOD INTENTION

दिव्यं घनतेजः कुर्वन् ध्वनिमंतः
संपश्यदशेषं मूर्तिः प्रणवात्मा ॥

The soul of Pranava (Om) is the divine Radiance which inspires sound in all beings and witnesses the creation. The unmanifest sound in the universe is this light. It is Om. This is the unified form of the Eswara and his Sakti.

- Uma Sahasram

As long as there is thought, God has a form. When the form is dissolved, God becomes rarified. Hence the argument about the form and formless aspect should be given up and one should meditate upon God and get identified with Him. This is the opinion of Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni. Hence he gave up such argument and described God thus. Though he got the vision of the Self through the grace of his master, he still did not give up the saguna (with form) aspect of God.

Ganapati informed his wife and father about his great good fortune of getting a real master. The news that Mouna Swamy was speaking spread like wild fire in Tiruvannamalai and the citizens ran up the hill in great curiosity. Mahatmas can be seen perhaps in a decade's time, but the darshan of Maharshis is rare. It was the rare good fortune of the citizens of Arunachala that such a Maharshi was living on the mountain in their midst, said Ganapati Muni and declared Mouna Swamy as Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. Visalakshi came to have Bhagavan's darshan along with her son Mahadeva. As soon as Bhagavan saw her, he said, 'Amma' (mother) has come. Since then everybody called Visalakshi as Amma.

Nayana wanted to do tapas in the presence of guru. Bhagavan told him to go and stay in a cave half the way up the hill. The cave was under the shade of a Mango tree and Nayana named it Chutaguha (mango tree cave).

पुण्या चूतगृहा सेयं रमणेन महर्षिणा।
अधिष्ठिता सेवकानां पापहंत्री विराजते ।।

'The meritorious mango tree cave which is the residence of Sri Ramana Maharshi shines destroying the sins of his servants.'

Nayana first sanctified (worshipped) the cave and took up his residence in it.

A lady called Echchammal used to bring food to Bhagavan daily. When Nayana started living near Bhagavan, she used to provide food for him also. Nayana, as a result of this facility could engage himself in tapas all the time.

For three days, Nayana was deep in mediation, in search of the source of 'I' thought. He was swimming in the ocean of Chit (Knowledge), unaware of the external world. Divine Mother, 'Apita Kuchamba', wearing a white silk saree, a pearl crown and a garland of parijata flowers which shone like a pure heart, smiling like the cool moon-light, appeared before Nayana. What a glorious vision! Dazzling white all around. Mother's dress was white, the parijata flowers around the neck were white, Her complexion was white and Her smile which was disseminating knowledge in silence was white beyond compare! Ganapati's heart melted into tears which flowed in streams from the eyes. He was a poet. Out came poetry on having such an experience.

सहादरेण यो वलक्षपारिजातमालया।
गलस्थलीविभूषया ध्वनिं विनैव भाषते।
महेशपुण्ययोषितो मनोज्ञहास एष मे
विभूतये प्रकल्पतां विधूतये च पाप्मनाम्।।

'May the smiles of Uma, the Divine spouse of Lord Maheswara, who wears a garland of white parijata flowers and speaks with love without words, bestow prosperity on us and burn away our sins!'

The mother blessed him raising her hand. She said, 'Ganapati! You have had Self-realisation, which is beyond forms. Shall I take leave?

Instantly, Ganapati remonstrated –

तवार्चनं निरंतरं यतो विधातु मस्म्यहं।
न विश्वनाथ पत्नि ते विसर्जनं विधीयते॥

Ganapati – O' Mother! I am determined to worship Thee always. I cannot give up this worship. So, Mother, please deign to give Thy darshan to me always.

Mother – People get divine visions according to their Prarabdha (results of previous actions). You do have such a prarabdha. May I now take leave my son?

Ganapati – Mother! How can You just leave me thus? Please instruct me as to what I should do who have vowed to serve my country.

Mother – My son! Write a book complete with all the knowledge of scriptures, which is beyond controversy of Saguna and Nirguna aspects of God and acceptable to all those who are versed in mantra and tantra methods. That book will become a spiritual guide to the country.

Ganapati said, beaming with all joy – 'Yes Mother! Give me the strength to write such a classic within twenty days from now'. Mother said, 'Alright' and disappeared when Ganapati prayed thus:-

अर्चनकाले रूपगता संस्तुतिकाले शब्दगता।
चिंतनकाले प्राणगता तत्वविचारे सर्वगता॥

She is the form when being worshipped,
The sound when praised with words, the
Life force when meditated upon and
All-pervading during enquiry.

Chapter 15

COMPOSITION OF 'UMA SAHASRAM'

येनाम शांतिं परमां वहन्तो नामानि शीताचलपुत्रिकायाः ।
संङ्कीर्तयन्तो विजने वसन्ति जयंततातादपि ते जयंति ॥ 8-31-6

Those who give up everything and live in solitude repeating the names of the daughter of Himalaya mountain will attain bliss greater than that of Indra, the father of Jayanta.

- Uma Sahasram

The Divine Mother has many names. But Nayana selected the name of 'Uma' for the deity of this magnum opus Uma Sahasram, a thousand versed composition. 'U' means Siva and 'Ma' means the limiting or measuring power. So she became Siva's power of limitation. This is Nayana's interpretation of the word Uma. 'Eswara' means he who creates the worlds with the 'I' thought. Uma is his power that measures up everything and is the changeful quality of the created worlds. The tangible worlds along with the mind, intellect and the ego all come under the concept of Jagat, that which moves. A sadhaka (aspirant) can progress in his spiritual development with the grace of this power. Uma is the qualitative form of Parasakti. She manifests as the power of tapas in sages. This power was experienced by Nayana and hence he named this work as 'Uma Sahasram'.

A composition executed with intellectual effort and one executed out of experience differ. Divine power is invested in a work which is composed out of experiential knowledge. Nayana has described how he composed Uma Sahsram:

दर्शितं रमणःसर्षैर्यावद्वाक्यैर्मिताक्षरैः ।
यावच्च पितृपादानां विज्ञातमुपदेशतः ॥
तन्त्रेभ्योऽवगतं यावत्प्राचामाचारशासिनां ।
यावत्परमपुण्यासु कुलगोष्ठिषु च श्रुतम् ॥
विदितं विविधं यावदितिहासविलोकनात् ।
यावदप्यात्मना दृष्टं तपता विपुलं तपः ॥
अधिकृत्य महामायां भुवनानामधीश्वरीं ।
अत्र स्तोत्रे प्रसङ्गेषु समस्तं तत्प्रदर्शितम् ॥

I have rendered this poem in praise of the Goddess of the Universe, Mahamaya (the great power of illusion). With the help of that which was given out in the condensed words of Sri Ramana Maharshi, with the help of the teaching received from my revered father, with that which was obtained through traditional knowledge, with what I culled from the mantras and tantras, with the help of study of the great epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata and with what was illumined through the immense tapas I did, I could deliver this poetry.

Nayana intended to make this composition of thousand verses within twenty days. He started the work in the presence of Bhagavan Sri Ramana on 26-11-1907, the Tuesday, the sixth day after the full moon in the month of Kartika in the year Plavanga. He used to read out in the evening to Bhagavan what was written during the day. The disciples present and Bhagavan enjoyed the reading.

One evening at 7 P.M. Nayana was reading out this sloka:

छिन्नां भिन्नां सुतरां सन्नामन्नाभावादभितः खिन्नां ।
एतां पातु भरतक्षोणीं जाये जिष्णोः कुरु मां शक्तः ॥

O' Mother! Give me power to save the land of Bharat which is mutilated awfully and is lacking food.

Food means strength and mental acumen. As these are lacking in the present day India, she is torn much asunder and going hungry. Hence Nayana was praying for the strength to rectify these inanities in India.

Mother Uma was also enjoying this poetry of Nayana and worked a little mischief. After reciting this sloka, Nayana felt intense hunger. Echchammal who used to bring food was not scheduled to come till 8 O' clock. At the time of Nayana's recitation of this sloka, Echammal had just started her cooking. She put rice and dhal in vessels and lit fire under them. Meanwhile a woman came and told her that Nayana was very hungry and wanted food immediately. Ecchammal told her that she had just started cooking food and it would not be ready for some time. But, the woman told her that it had already got cooked and asked Ecchammal to open the lids and see. To the utter surprise of Ecchammal, the food was really cooked. She at once sent the food to Nayana and told him about the wonderful incident. Nayana smiled to himself at the wonder worked by the Mother.

Nayana's right thumb got blistered through writing continuously for ten days. Still he continued writing for some more time. By the 19th day, only 700 slokas were composed. The thumb got swollen and writing became impossible. His disciples got worried. 300 slokas had to be composed in one day. An insurmountable difficulty! But Nayana's face showed no signs of worry. He had vested all the burden on the Mother and so was in perfect peace. Now the job was the Mother's.

That night a Vaidya (Doctor) named Punyakoti of Tiruvannamalai had a dream in which a Brahmin appeared and told him, 'The Muniswara on Arunagiri has a blister on his thumb. Go and treat him!' The next

morning, Punyakoti went up the hill and started observing Bhagavan's fingers. Bhagavan knew his intention and so guided him to Kavyakanta. The Doctor operated on the blister, bandaged the finger and gave medicine to alleviate the pain.

Even though the finger was treated, it was impossible to write with the finger. Nayana's disciples offered to write at his dictation. As Nayana was rather weak due to the operation, he told five of them to come at 8 p.m. that night to take down what he dictated. It was Sunday, the first day of Margasira month (15-12-1907), the last day scheduled to complete the composition. Due to the treatment of Punyakoti Nayana's pain lessened considerably and he was ready to dictate extempore. At 7-30 p.m. Ramana Maharshi was brought to the cave where Ganapati Muni was. Maharshi sat on a high stool and he went into Samadhi and the Muni sat at his feet. Five disciples sat around with papers and pens. Nayana started to dictate, at the rate of one line of the verse to one disciple. Nayana started five verses simultaneously. After dictating to the five disciples, he would come back to the first and dictate the second line and go on dictating each one the second line of the verse they were writing. Each verse had a separate metre, so that five slokas in five metres were done at one time. The atmosphere was filled with the flow of a rare feat of poetical composition. An astounding unparalleled glorious feat in the history of poetry!

Midnight! The last five slokas were written down. 300 slokas were composed and written down in exactly four hours time. The scribes took a deep breath in great relief and looked at Nayana. Nayana did not come down to the physical level as yet. For five minutes there was absolute silence. Bhagavan opened his eyes. 'Nayana! Have you taken down all that I have said?' he asked.

Nayana brought himself down to the earth. His eyes were moist. Devotion and joy shone supreme in his face. He touched Bhagavan's feet with his hands and said, 'Yes, Bhagavan! All that you have said has been received!'

The disciples perhaps did not understand what the great guru and the great disciple were talking about. It was really to be only experienced and not spoken about. It was beyond the ken of speech!

Chapter 16

ON THE ELEPHANT

O' Lord! Driver of Arjuna's Chariot! The rishis reveal thy quality of saving. Thou hast brought the souls to discipline and saved them. Thou art always Atma without qualities. Worship of Thy qualities is yoga and enjoyment.

- Vasishta Mahadeva Sastri

Whether Jnanis reside in towns or forests, their saving grace will be working in full on all beings. Bhagavan's presence was an evident example of this. Mahatma Gandhi used to tell those who were neck-deep in troubles to go to Sri Ramana and stay atleast three days in his presence. If simple presence works such wonders, what about friendship with him! This friendship was what saved Kuchela the poor friend of Sri Krishna. It is perhaps because of this quality of the Lord that people who have taken refuge at the guru's feet and those who worship Lord Siva praise and serve the Lord in various ways and are redeemed. When the guru blesses the disciple with all love, the sishya automatically takes refuge at his feet with the same amount of love. While Nayana was devoted to Bhagavan, the child Mahadeva made friends with Bhagavan and played with him showing his guru bhakti in his own way.

Nayana has composed a rare great work with uninterrupted austerity for twenty days. Bhagavan knew his disciple needed rest and recuperation. The nerves had been heated up tremendously and so Bhagavan took him to Sapta Jhari (7 springs) and kept him there for one week which cooled the nerves of Nayana. By the grace of Uma Devi, Nayana got the powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience and thought reading.

The news of Nayana's great composition reached far and wide. Also, the news that Bhagavan started speaking ran through the town like wild fire and people crowded Virupaksha Guha everyday. Nayana's disciples begged him to read out and comment on Uma Sahasram and make known the invaluable meaning of the slokas. Nayana agreed and asked them to make arrangements for the boarding and lodging of those who came from far away places. Patchaiamman temple (Marakata Syamahamba) was selected as the venue to give discourses on Uma Sahasram. The disciples accordingly sent invitations to all concerned. Visalakshamma came from Vellore with son Mahadeva. On seeing him, Bhagavan asked him lovingly whether he remembered him. Mahadevan did not say anything as he did not remember. He said, 'Aham Bho Abhivadaye' to Bhagavan, went away and started playing at some distance. Meanwhile some visitors came to see Bhagavan and asked whether Bhagavan remembered them. They had come once before, but Bhagavan did not remember them and so kept quiet.

Now Mahadeva came running to Bhagavan and asked him, 'What did they ask you Bhagavan? Bhagavan replied that they asked whether he remembered them. 'And what did you reply, Bhagavan?' asked Mahadeva. 'I told them I did not remember', said Bhagavan. 'I did the same to you', saying this quickly, the child ran away. The incident raised much merriment among those present.

At Nayana's request, Bhagavan changed his residence to Patchaiamman temple. Nayana and wife used to go to the town frequently on some errands leaving Mahadeva with Bhagavan. The child had a good physique, long wavy hair and he used to wear vibhuti (ash) on his forehead and arms and kumkum on the forehead. He used to look like a young yogi and attracted the visitors who came for the darshan of Bhagavan. Bhagavan used to talk and play with him affectionately. Thus they became friends.

One day, Bhagavan made Deva to sit on his back and started swimming in the tank of Patchaiamman temple. Deva found it very enjoyable and started jumping on Bhagavan's back shouting, 'go, go, hei, hei'. Bhagavan found it difficult to bear the child in his jumping position. He told Deva to stop jumping, but the child did not heed. With great difficulty, Bhagavan brought him to the shore and scolded Deva mildly, 'Deva, you did not know swimming, but made it difficult for me to bear you. Is it proper?'

Deva replied, quite innocently, 'Why Bhagavan! Even if I did not know swimming, you knew. Is it not enough?'

Deva's mischief extended to other things. He used to stop visitors from going to Bhagavan and tell them that Bhagavan was in Samadhi, so they could ask himself whatever they had to ask and he would answer them. He would not let them go near Bhagavan till Bhagavan himself told him to let them. After talking with Bhagavan, the visitors used to ask Bhagavan about the child and his ability to answer their questions. Bhagavan used to smile and say that Deva was quite capable.

The visitors were pleased immensely and took the child with them to the temple. At dusk time Deva came back and told Bhagavan with beaming face that he went on a ride on an elephant.

The actions of Jnanis are inscrutable. A child who rode on his back was by his grace made to ride an elephant. Bhagavan took Deva on his lap and asked him to go to sleep as he was very much tired. Nayana and Amma came from the town and were overjoyed to see their son being fondled by Bhagavan. The mischievous child and the gracious guru!

Chapter 17

THIS IS KARTIKEYA

अङ्कजुषे रमणाय नु दातुं
मानववेषधराय गुहाय।
शोणनगार्धतनो बहु दुग्धं
मातरपीतकुचेह विभासि॥ 7-26-18

O' Mother, spouse of Lord Siva! Thou hast manifested here as Apita Kuchamba to give the milk of your breast to Guha, your son, who has incarnated as Ramana who sits in your lap.

- Uma Sahasram

Nayana started to recite Uma Sahasram at the scheduled time. Bhagavan sat on a higher level. The phalasruti (the merit of reciting the composition) was read out:

यदि गायन्निमं ग्रन्धमुत्तरेदापदः कृती
महिमा स महेश्वर्याः शीर्षं स्यादुन्नतं न मे।
अय मम्बापरप्रीते रुद्रारो वाङमयाकृती
अर्थः कश्चिदनेनापि नतां यदि मया जितम्॥

'Those who read this poem will surmount all difficulties, but it is only the grace of the Mother and not mine. This exposition is my exposition of the devotion I have to the Mother's feet. Hence if it (the reading) gives any benefit to good people it is to my credit indeed!'

Honey flowed from Nayana's voice filling up the whole atmosphere with sweetness. The gods themselves, as if, came down to hear him. The whole place

reverberated with divine sounds. An elation, a joy in all the listeners made them forget themselves. None was conscious of the time element while the recitation was going on. Some of the devotees used to get divine visions and some got dreams with the goddess appearing in them. To everybody Nayana looked like Lord Vinayaka Himself.

One day, Mother Parvati appeared to Narayana Ghanapati (Nayana's disciple) in a dream and asked him to recite some slokas from Uma Sahasram. He started reciting a sloka. She stopped him and asked 'Ganapataye Stanaghatayah' to be recited. She heard with pleasure, Ghanapati's recitation and smiling, disappeared.

गणपतये स्तनघटयोः पदकमले सप्तलोकभक्तेभ्यः ।
अधरपुटे त्रिपुरजिते ददासि पीयूष मम्ब त्वम् ।।

O' Mother! Thou art giving ambrosia to Ganapati from thy breasts; to all thy devotees from Thy lotus feet and to Lord Siva from Thy lips.

After waking up Narayana Ghanapati thought over the meaning of this sloka and on analysis found out that as Nayana declared himself in Navadeepa as the son of the Mother, she liked this sloka more than other slokas. Ghanapati came to Ramana and Ganapati and told his experience of his dream. Mother Uma Devi did not stop with introducing in this way her elder son Ganapati to the world, but the next day she made her younger son known to the world. Bhagavan was sitting silent with a far-away look. Nayana was sitting at his feet. Some disciples were sitting around Nayana. Suddenly, there was a bright glow around Maharshi's head. There arose six star-like lights from this glow, touched Bhagavan's forehead one by one and receding, merged in the glow. The glow gradually merged in Bhagavan. After some moments Bhagavan's mouth uttered, 'Who am I?' in

indistinct low tones. Nayana heard the words and with great joy and enthusiasm said, 'Why, Bhagavan, you are god Kartikeya' and prostrated himself at Bhagavan's feet. He explained to the disciples present about Bhagavan's being Skanda, that is Kartikeya.

यानायात्र न केकिनां कुलपतिः स्नानाय न स्वर्णदी
पानाय क्षितिभृन्महेन्द्रदुहितु र्न स्तन्य दुग्धामृतम् ।
गानाय प्रमथेश्वरा स्सवयसो नैवात्र वीणाभृतो
वासं शोणगिरौ करोषि भगवन् क्रौंचाद्रिछेत्तः कुतः ॥

O' Lord Kartikeya! You do not have a vehicle of peacock here. There is no divine stream Ganga to bathe in. No milk of the breast of the daughter of the mountain king to drink. Neither are there the commanders of Pramadhas for you to play with and no divine minstrels with lutes to play music for you. So, then, Lord! Why have you taken residence on this Arunachala?

Nayana composed 10 slokas praising Sri Maharshi. These ten slokas are included in 'Sri Ramana Chatvarimsat' composed by him. Along with the darshan of Lord Kartikeya Nayana also got the intuition of the mantra, 'Om Vachadbhuve namah' ओं वचद्भुवे नमः for japam which he detailed in Ramana Gita.

Chapter 18

THE CREATOR OF CULTURE-THE POET (KAVIH)

क्षांतं किं मम दुरितं शान्तं किं देवि ते स्वांतं।
अनुगृह्णासि विचित्रंमामप्यपराधिनां प्रथमम्॥ 4-14-13

O' Mother! Have my sins been forgiven? Or, has Thy heart become soft and peaceful? Why am I, who am the first among sinners, been thus blessed by Thee?

- Uma Sahasram

This is a bit surprising. How can Nayana, such a great man of austerities, be a sinner? In Sanskrit, there is a great saying

उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

which means 'For great souls this whole world is their family'. Their view will always be universal. The troubles and pleasures of all the humanity are felt as their own. The life force in the whole creation, the dynamic energy, enmeshed in worldly matters, is hidden in all as ignorance and is struggling to come into the open and hence is devoid of peace. Hence if that Divine Sakti becomes peaceful it is the end of all sin. Nayana's tapas was all for the welfare of the whole creation. He uses the word, 'sinner' as meaning the sins of the world. As such if the Divine Mother could forgive him the whole world is forgiven and there is peace all around. Nayana's national or rather universal spirit is represented in this sloka.

After proclaiming Bhagavan as the world teacher (Jagadacharya) and composing the great Vedantic, metaphysical and invocational work, Uma Sahasram, Nayana approached Bhagavan with great humility, told

him that he still had the freedom of the country at his heart and the redemption of people from foolish orthodoxy and by a critical evaluation of the puranas setting the society on the proper path. He wanted to serve the country and himself became a faggot in the national freedom sacrifice and human progress. Nayana's aim was to merge his identity in the concept of a world family. He requested Bhagavan to help him in this endeavour. He told Bhagavan that his disciples wanted him to give discourses in Madras on Uma Sahasram and enlighten them. He requested Bhagavan for permission to the trip to Madras.

Bhagavan knew that Nayana was born as a partial manifestation of Lord Vishnu and hence his primary concern would be the uplift of humanity. Bhagavan advised Nayana in Tamil. Nayana's translation of that advice –

न्यस्यतां भरः सकल जित्वरे ।
कार्य सत्करे जगदधीश्वरे ॥

Rest the burden on the Lord Siva who is the sole conqueror of the worlds and performer of all good deeds.

नित्यया धिया निहितया स्वयं ।
स्थीयतां त्वया हृदि परात्परे ॥

Be still in your mind and keeping it in the hands of the Lord be unwavering in your heart.

भावनिर्णयप्रभु रसौ पुमान् ।
कार्यसाधने भवति शक्तिमान् ॥

He, who can make decisions has the power also to fulfill his mission.

भूतभव्यकृत् भुवनभूपतिः ।
कारये दयं कुशलकारिणः ॥

That Lord who is the Lord of the Universe and the dispenser of past, present and future will arrange for the proper work force.

साध्य मुत्तमं समयतश्चरेत् ।
मास्तु संशय स्तव विदांमते ॥

O, Scholar! Whatever good is to be, God will see to that at the proper time. Leave everything to Him with unquestioning faith and be at peace.

Taking this advice of Bhagavan, Nayana started for Madras along with Vasudeva Sastri.

The citizens of Madras gave Nayana a hearty welcome. As the poet of Uma Sahsram, he was deemed almost equal to poet Kalidasa and revered and served with great devotion. Nayana used to give discourses daily on the various aspects of Uma Sahasram. He also used to tell them that Sri Ramana was a Maharshi taken birth as a human being to redeem mankind from the didactic approach to the scriptures and narrow perspective about religious matters. He used to extol the greatness of Bhagavan who bestows Liberation on those who approach him.

One day Nayana went to a holy place called Tiruvottiyur near Madras. He visited the temple of the famous Tripura Sundari and while he was ecstatically invocating the deity, a student touched his feet and prostrated before him.

Having finished his meditation, Nayana made the student sit by his side and asked for his parentage and other particulars.

'Master! My name is Kapali Sastri. I am studying Sanskrit. Hearing your invocation of the Mother, I am very much impressed. Having come to know that you are the famous tapaswi and poet Kavyakanta and thinking

that one can get salvation through service done to you, I have come to beg for your grace to make me your disciple'.

Hearing this humble plea of the boy, Nayana closed his eyes and meditated for a few minutes. He understood that the boy had a very bright future, he glanced at Mother Tripura Sundari's face which was looking at the boy with favour and Her smile conveyed this secret to Nayana. He was filled with joy and paternal love towards Kapali. Nayana blessed Kapali.

Together, both of them circumambulated the temple and saw an old well in a corner. Kapali told about the story current about the well. 'This temple was a Kalika temple at first. Somehow, the Mother got angry and entered the well', goes the local story. Instantly, Nayana composed this poem on Mother Kali:

कूपे विभासि किल कोपवती त्रियामा
चारिण्यशेषजगदीश्वरि कालि भद्रे ।
विभ्राजदादिपुरवासिनि दासमापत्
कूपादुदंचय पदाम्बुज भक्तमेनम् ॥

O' Kali, O' Bhadra! O' Adipuravasini! We hear that you got angry and taken this well as your abode. Please come out and uplift this devotee from the well of calamity!

Both the guru and sishya had a hearty laugh at this twist to the story.

After Ramana's darshan, Nayana had given up literary pursuits like meetings of scholars and avadhanas. He became introvert and inclined more and more towards tapas. Bhagavan was a clear example to the existence of the Reality and the possibility of its attainment. So, noble pursuit of human values, harmonic approach, non-violence and the like were in his opinion the necessary aids for the attainment of independence of India. He

thought that it was possible with the grace of a guru like Sri Ramana. For this purpose, Nayana started to wield his pen. In the modern age, people get influenced by a poet's writings. He who can speak fearlessly is a true author. Nayana was one such great poet.

Kapali wanted very much to witness the previous glorious poetic feats of Nayana. He pleaded with Nayana and got him to agree to a Nyastakshari method of literary feat. Many Scholars attended this meeting. 56 squares were drawn on a slate in four rows. Nayana was asked to put numbers in arithemetic progression in them and construct a verse in the metre, 'Vasanta Tilaka'. As soon as Nayana started to write, a scholar started giving out the letters. Nayana composed a beautiful sloka fit to the prescription:

प्रीतिं ददाति विपुलां श्रियमातनोति
निर्माति नूत्नसमयं दुरितं धुनोति ।
आर्द्रीकरोति हृदयान्यपि देवतानां
कस्मै शुभाय न भवेत्कविता विदोषा ।।

Pure poetry gives pleasure and immense prosperity. Creates new times. Removes sins. Melts even the hearts of Gods. What merit does poetry not give?

Raja Kalasya Karanam राजा कालस्य कारणम् is an old adage. Kings used to rule countries in the past. Poetry was written praising them. In that context this adage was perhaps apt in those times. But in these modern times, a poet is the creator of culture. So, the adage should be Kavih Kalasya Kararnam meaning a poet is the creator of culture of the times. For the protection of dharma for maintenance of Truth, for the welfare and progress of the society, a poet's writings will be most beneficial and promoting. Hence extolling the power of the pen, Nayana used the word modern नूत्न in this poem

after a few seconds of thought. This is a proof of his far sightedness.

In the long poem, Indrani Saptasati, Nayana made clear the purpose of his descent into this world:

अपरो नव्यकाव्या न्यनवद्यानि धन्यः ।
विदधात्यप्रयत्नाद्बुधभोगक्षमाणि ॥

Another blessed one (himself) writes without any effort new, unimpeachable poetry to the enjoyment of scholars.

We understand how much Nayana possessed modern approach, patriotism and reformistic views on society if we go through his works, 'Viswamimamsa, Manisha Sangraham, Indrani Saptasati and complete history of India, etc.

Chapter 19

HELPING HAND OF THE GURU

यातायातविहारे राधारेषु च शीर्षे संचारं विदधानं किं चाशेषविसारि।
आलंबेन विहीनं व्योमाभं परिपूर्णं निश्शब्दं गुरुरूपं तद्ब्रह्म स्फुरतान्मे॥

May that form of the guru, which travels to and fro in the six Chakras and the Sahasrara and pervades everything, and which is without support, and is like ether, complete and silent, intuit me.

- Guru Gitam

The disciple surrenders himself to the guru totally. There is no more any individuality in the disciple. Hence there is no more sorrow, only bliss reigns. Bhagavan declared this as the secret of surrender.

When Uma Sahasram was finished, Bhagavan opened his eyes and asked, 'Have you written down all that I have said?' and Nayana immediately replied, 'Yes, Bhagavan! All that you have given out with grace has been written down'. Even though there were two forms, that of Bhagavan and Nayana, the 'I' that was speaking through them was the guru, Eswara or the Atma.

Pranavananda Swamy requested Nayana to compose, 'Guru Stuti', a praise of the guru. Nayana, who was extolled as the harbinger of new times, and a great poet, entered the temple of Tripura Sundari of Tiruvottiyur and saw a small temple of Ganesa in a corner of the garden. As the atmosphere of the place looked very peaceful, he entered it and went introvert. He remained in the temple for sixteen days without any consciousness of the world outside.

Mother's sakti started Her shuttle movement in his Chakras. His body became the temple. He was immersed

in full Bliss. Suddenly there was some obstruction. A great pain was felt in the backbone. Nayana could not sit straight and had to lie down. Slowly he lay himself on the floor. He did not understand this test of the Lord Siva. Ganesa in the idol was looking on as if he knew nothing.

नाकेयाति सुरो वा त्वं चेत्किंचिदुदास्यं ।
आधारे विदधासि स्कंदस्याग्रज लास्यम् ॥

O' Ganesa, elder brother of Skanda, please make your dance in the Muladhara a bit slower. Then this human being will be able to get up – prayed Nayana.

This prayer was heard by Bhagavan in Virupaksha cave. Next instant, he was with Nayana. The pain in Nayana's back subsided with the touch of Bhagavan's hand. Tears gushing from his eyes, Nayana prostrated before Bhagavan touching his feet with his hand.

Nayana, when he went to Arunachalam on 17-10-1929, recounted this experience of guru's grace to Bhagavan and Bhagavan established the fact. Bhagavan related the incident – 'Some years back I was lying down in Virupaksha Guha. I was not in samadhi. Suddenly, my body seemed to rise up. Up, up, it went and all the external phenomena disappeared and only a white light remained all around. Suddenly, the body started to climb down. The external objects were visible. I thought that this was the method of travel of the siddhas. I understood that the place was Tiruvottiyur. I walked along the main road. A Ganesa temple was seen. I went in. Did something. Talked something. I do not remember what. Suddenly, I woke up and saw that I was on my bed in Virupaksha cave. I told all this to Palani Swamy immediately.

After obtaining the grace of the guru in this way, Nayana went back to Vellore.

Chapter 20

THE STORY OF RENUKA

पापानि मे हरतु काचन कृत्तशीर्षा
माता पदाम्बुजभुजिष्यवितीर्णहर्षा ।
या भक्तलोकवरदानविधौ विनिद्रा
वासं कमण्डलुधुनीपुलिने करोति ॥

- Uma Sahasram (7-4-3)

May mother Renuka who resides in Kundalipura (Padaiveedu) on the banks of river Kamandalu, remove my sins. I have surrendered at her feet. She is always alert in bestowing boons to her devotees.

Mother Renuka is the sixth manifestation of Parasakti. She is described as Vajravairochani by the Vedas.

The sky is Parasakti. The Sakti which shines as the dust particles in the sky is Renuka. Rishis described the sky as "the great dust". She splinters the light as various groups of dust and hence is called Renuka by Tantrics. As she does not have a head, she is called 'Asira'. The destruction of Ahamkara is the beheading of Renuka in the story of Renuka in the Purana. Nayana has explained this beheading as an analogy to the Kapala-bheda of the yogis. Nayana had this Kapala-bheda experience and so he authoritatively declares it.

Nayana considered this story of Renuka of the Puranas as rather misleading and wanted to reconstruct it. After he reached Vellore from his sojourn in Madras he concentrated on re-arranging this story. He stayed most of the time at home as Srimathi Visalakshi was nearing

confinement. Nayana had some books from the library in Padaiveedu and started to work on the story of Renuka.

The story of Renuka in the Puranas goes like this :-

Renuka was the wife of Sage Jamadagni. She was a great Pativrata or dedicated wife. There she saw a Gandharva's reflection in the water. This Celestial being was passing on his chariot in the sky with great pomp. Renuka's attention was momentarily diverted by the pomp of the Gandharva. Jamadagni heard of this lapse on the part of Renuka and asks his son Parasu Rama to behead her. The son obeys the father. Renuka does not let her head fall to the ground but holds it in her hand.

Nayana eulogises this story in Uma Sahasram thus:-

छेदाय चेद् गतरजा मुनिरादिदेश
चिच्छेद चेद्बहुगुणस्तनयः सवित्रीम्।
दाह्यं शरीरमखिल प्रभुरीशशक्तिः
यद्याविवेश च कथा परमाद्भुतेयम्॥

– Uma Sahasram 7-28-5

Giving up anger, the rishi ordered his son to cut the mother's head off; the virtuous dutiful son obeyed the father's command and sakti pervaded the body from which the head was cut off. This story is a rare wonder.

पुत्रः प्रियस्तव शिरः सहसा चकर्त
कृत्ता च हर्षभरिता भवती ननर्त।
नो तस्य पापमपि नो तव काऽपि हानिः
नाशोऽस्य हा भुजभुवामभवद्विपाकः॥

– Uma Sahasram 7-28-6

Your dear son cut your head off. No sin accrued to him. You danced after the head was cut off. You were not at all

harmed. Oh! But the incident originated the destruction of the warrior-clan.

अम्बैव सा सुरभिरर्जुनभूपतिर्यां
वीर्याज्जहार स च भार्गव आजहार।
तस्या हतेः परगृहस्थितिरेव हेतुः
गंधर्वदर्शनकथा रिपुकल्पितैव॥

Uma Sahasram 7-4-7

The story of Renuka's attention being diverted by the sight of the celestial being was not true. In fact, the cow Nandini, said to be stolen by the King was Renuka herself. Parasu Rama killed the evil king Kartavirya and brought her home. Living in the house of the enemy was the reason for which her head was cut off. Renuka was pure. Otherwise she would not be worshipped.

This story was reconstructed like this:-

Kartavirya was the king of Haihaya-clan. He acquired many powers (siddhis) from sage Dattatreya. He was an able King, but subsequently he became arrogant. Satya who was the sister of Renuka was his wife. King Prasenajit was the father of the sisters.

In course of time Kartavirya became thoroughly arrogant and started to harass the virtuous. People got frightened by his misdeeds. But he could not be killed by anyone less powerful than Dattatreya. Parasu Rama was such a one. Jamadagni and Renuka invested Parasu Rama with the necessary strength and power and made him kill Kartavirya.

Once Renuka visited her sister Satya. She was pleased with the hospitality of Satya and in return invited Satya to her home. After some time Kartavirya, along with his entourage and family, went into the forest to hunt. Forgetting the boundaries of his own land, he entered

deep into the forest where Jamadagni had his ashram. Meanwhile the food-stuffs for the men were almost totally consumed and they were alarmed. Fortunately they located Jamadagni's ashram and came to know that Renuka was their mistress's sister. Having come to know that Satya and Kartavirya were in the forest, Renuka invited them to her home and fed the whole company with a delicious feast by just sprinkling of the water from her Kamandal. Seeing this power of Renuka Kartavirya wanted to possess her. He gave a stunning blow to Jamadagni and while he was in a stupor stole away Renuka. She was bound by the women of his retinue as he was afraid to touch her himself. Jamadagni regained consciousness and appraised his sons of the atrocity committed by Kartavirya. He invested Parasurama with his power of weapons (Astras) and sent him to retrieve his mother. Accordingly Parasu Rama killed Kartavirya and brought Renuka home. Parasurama was asked by Jamadagni to behead Renuka as she lived in an enemy's house for some time. Thus Renuka became the cause of destruction of the evil Kshatriya clan and was worshipped as Krittika Sakti (one who cuts off evil) and so Parasurama was called Kartikeyan (son of Krittika) afterwards.

While Nayana was reconstructing the old puranic story thus, Visalakshi gave birth to a girl-child and she was named Vajreswari, another name of Renuka.

Chapter 21

REVELATION OF MANTRA

संहोत्रमित्यद्भुत शक्तियुक्तं
वृषाकपेर्दर्शन मम्ब मंत्रम् ।
या वैदिकं ते मनुजो भजेत
किंचिन्न तस्येह जगत्यसाध्यम् ॥

O' mother! There is nothing impossible to him who repeats the mantra संहोत्र which is your mantra, in the Vedas and which has been envisioned by Ganapati (Kavyakanta).

- Indrani Sapta Sati

In this sloka, Nayana has declared that he had the darshan of a mantra and that mantra pertained to the Vedic texts. Only a rishi can have this sort of mantra darshan. All our Vedas are full of mantras thus envisioned by rishis. Mantra gives success to the sadhaka. Veda mantras are full of meaning. If repeated with full dedication, success is sure to follow. Because Nayana was of rishi tradition he could get the vision of mantras.

'We are the children of God', says the Bible. Bhagavan who dedicated himself to God said, 'O' My father! I have come as per your order'. 'Apparukku Pullai Adakkum,' 'Son's obeisance to father' said he, taking the prasad of Arunachaleswara. All these things point out only one Truth. The Creator of the Universe, Indra, is the father of everybody as the Prime Mover of the universe. He is the one who in the form of 'I' resides in the center of the hearts of Jivas. All His children have the right to call on him. He who has seen the Father in his pure heart

can merge in the Father and become one with Him. This is the truth of Mantra, meditation and steadiness. After his daughter was born, Nayana took up residence in Padai Veedu, the place of Renuka. Worship of Renuka, tapas and Uma Sahasra recitation were his routine activities. Renuka Devi was always dancing on his tongue and in his sight. Kundalini Sakti used to travel to and fro in the backbone of Nayana. The secret of Hridya Vidya which he received from Bhagavan was inspiring him.

One day Nayana was sitting in the temple of Ekamukha Kumaraswamy. A man with matted locks went past Nayana, entered the temple, took the weapon from Kumara's hand, placed it on his shoulder like an axe, came out, looked at Nayana, walked a few yards and disappeared. Though surprised initially Nayana took him to be Parasu Rama, the son of Renuka. Kumara Swamy who appeared in the form of Sri Ramana appeared here strangely as Parasu Rama. They both were the one essence in different forms, parts of the same power.

When Nayana was happily meditating thus – he remembered a Sukta from Rig Veda :

रायस्कामो वज्रहस्तं सुदक्षिणं पुत्रो न पितरं हुवे।

- Rig Veda 7 – Sukta 32

This Sukta is in 27 padas in the Brihati metre while this one mantra is in Virat metre as if it is an armour to the whole Sukta. This mantra flashed to Vasishta Maharshi at first and then to his son, Sakti. Hence this mantra is in their names. After them only Nayana had the flash of this mantra. Nayana gave this mantra a lot of importance –

Rayas रायस् - The wealth of this world and heaven too.

Kamah कामः - Desiring which,

Vajrahastam वज्रहस्तम् - (Him) Indra who has the weapon Vajra in his hand,

Sudakshinam सुदक्षिणम् - who is on the right side of the body,

Putro na pitaram huve पुत्रो न पितरम् हुवे - I call as a son calls his father.

When Parasurama was cutting off the head of his mother, this mantra came out from her as a teaching. There are twenty letters in this mantra. In the puranas, it is written that Renuka beat her breast twenty times which was simply distorting this teaching of mantra. This is a mantra pertaining to the Astra Vidya. Parasurama was the recipient of this mantra. The meaning of this mantra was distorted to mean Parasurama conquering the world 20 times. The inner meaning of this Purana is nobler than the external meaning.

The Paradevata is in the form of Sakti in our body. She is active in all the six Charkas, and the basic Chakra and is extolled as the Mother of the Purusha who is shining in the heart as 'I' and she being recognized as the 7 matrices. This energy is the source of thoughts, that is, the mind. Mind is the cause of Ego in those who are body conscious all the time. That Ego is Kartaviryarjuna. The backbone is the Vajradandam.

The power that rises like a serpent in the Sushumna which runs through the backbone is called Renuka. There must be awakening (breaking) of Nadi (Nadibhedana) for the purification of the mind. If a snake is beaten by a stick, it will be mashed. But if it is cut with a sharp instrument, it will be broken neatly. In Yogis, this breaking of the Nadis must be sharp and neat. An axe is an apt instrument for this purpose. The mind which works in the Ego is impure through getting involved in fulfillment of desires. That is the symbolic stealing of

Renuka by Kartavirya (the arrogant Ego). To bring her back the neck which is the base of the mind had to be cut off. Thus the mind had to be destroyed and the pure Sakti reaches the head or Sahasrara Chakra. This is symbolized as the cutting off of Renuka's head by an axe. In this yoga, when the Kundalini Sakti rises, the cranium of the Yogi gets split. This is called the method of Jyotir Vidya in the Upanishads. This Vidya gives one the Knowledge of direct and indirect Knowledge and also miraculous powers. Nayana had experienced this Vidya. (This is a concise explanation).

Nayana, who had the darshan of this mantra, became a 'new Vasishta' and taught it to many disciples. This mantra, in his opinion, gives one all prosperity.

Chapter 22

UMA SAHASRAM MANUSCRIPT GOT WASHED AWAY

भगवती गगनस्थलचारिणी जयति संगरंगविहारिणी ।
सुकृतशत्रुमतिभ्रमकारिणी हरिहयारिहयादिविदारिणी ॥

May the powerful Mother shine in glory, who journeys in the sky, who dances in war fields, who confuses the minds of the enemies of the righteous and who destroys the enemies (like Nahusha) of Indra.

- Indrani Sapta Sati

Enjoying the bliss of the service of the feet of the Divine Mother and swimming in the ocean of grace, Nayana had the revelation of Her true story. He wanted Her to be the protecting armour of the Indians showering Her grace on them and composed the 'Song of Renuka'. It is the daily repeated mantra for his disciples. It became an armour of mantra to the Indra Sena Society which took up the task of redeeming India from the foreign yoke. This mantra seems to have a divine power which protects and also wards off evil for those who repeat it. Joy reigns abundant in the houses of those who repeat it.

Nayana was a great patriot. He composed many verses in Uma Sahasram invoking the grace of Uma to free his country from slavery. Those who were devoted to the British Government raised a doubt that Uma Sahasram may give rise to rebellion among the people and complained on that score to the Government. The Government had already recognized Indra Sena as a rebel group. Due to the complaint of the people against him, Nayana became a problem to the Government. There was an official notification published in the newspapers by

the Government: 'A rebel society has been started and with many students affiliated to it, a person named Kavyakanta Ganapati Sastri, in the garb of an ascetic, is moving about in villages in the name of tapas. He is at present in Padai Veedu, a holy place of Renuka worship. This rebellion is going to spread like gun powder. The officials must be wary of this and take proper precautions'.

This news gave rise to worry in the South. The next day there were reports contradicting this news. Sri Subrahmanyam who was a Professor in Vellore Christian College wrote an article in the 'Hindu' paper strongly criticizing the Government's attitude.

The Governor gave orders to ban 'Uma Sahasram' and to arrest Nayana. Two detectives of Police were engaged to arrest Nayana. Appu Sastri informed Nayana of this development. Nayana was cool. He felt happy and said, 'Renuka in the form of Draupadi destroyed all the enemies of unrighteousness in the Kurukshetra war. Now also she has taken up the weeding out of unrighteousness in the form of Durga.' Nayana looked at the face of Mother Renuka and She was looking red with anger, ready to destroy evil doers.

वैरिगण निर्दळनखड्गवरपाणे वाससि पदोदशनवाससि च शोणे।
नेत्रमिष पावकविशेषितललाटे पापमखिलं जहि मृगाधिपति घोटे॥

'O' Mother, Thou, who hast a Lion as your vehicle, who hast a sword of destruction of the foes in hand, who art red in the colour of the feet, lower lip and dress, and who hast fire in the forehead in the form of an eye, please destroy all sin.' This is the Durga, who is the result of Nayana's tapas.

Nayana was sitting in an easy chair at about 3 O' Clock in the afternoon. The book, 'Uma Sahasram' was

placed on a stool in front of him. Nayana sat with half closed eyes in dhyana. Suddenly, a stranger came and touched his feet reverentially. Nayana opened his eyes and asked him what he wanted. 'O' Master! I am impressed very much by your literary works. I want to become your disciple and serve you', said the stranger. Nayana closed his eyes and meditated for a few minutes. Next he opened his eyes and said, 'Those who are seeking truth should not resort to lies. Since you are a detective, you please go about your job', and again closed his eyes. The man was stunned. He understood that Nayana was a great soul. Meanwhile some more policemen arrived on the scene. They showed the search warrant to Nayana and started searching the whole house for the book Uma Sahasram. The book with big bold letters was in front of Nayana. But, the policemen could not see it as if through magic. As they could not find the book they were in a dilemma whether to arrest Nayana or not. The Governmental order was to arrest Nayana along with the book. They were afraid of arresting him without the book. So they retired saying they would come another time.

With this incident, Nayana's disciples got frightened. Doraiswamy was afraid of the police harassment of Nayana. So, he took the manuscript of Uma Sahasram, reached the shores of river Kundalini and buried it under a rock in a bed of sand. The rock was called 'Pambadichchan parai'. Poor Doraiswamy thought he could recover it later at some suitable time. But, as God willed it, there was a heavy rain that night, the river was in spate, and the manuscript was lost forever. Nayana heard about this exploit of his disciple in the morning. But he did not scold anybody. He said with a smile that everything was the sport of the Mother. He asked the disciples to convey the news of this incidental happening to Bhagavan.

When Nayana was in meditation in front of Renuka in the evening, he heard his inner voice speaking – 'Do not worry. The composition is not lost. Through the flow of the river, it has become a powerful weapon and the power of the work has merged in the people and gives them dynamic energy to blow the bugle for the war for independence. The mantras, tantras and philosophic contents of the work will become the weapons of war. That work is the Sakti of the Divine Mother. If Indians are to get strength for the fight for independence, Uma Sahasram should dissolve in the hearts of Indians and make them strong and energetic. That is what has happened now. You are a great poet. You can compose many more poems. Start the struggle!'

Nayana's eyes were filled with tears at this merciful grace of the Divine Mother. He touched the feet of Renuka. Renuka smiled at and blessed Her son.

The meaning of 'Pambadichchan Parai' is that it was a rock struck by a snake. The serpent force that rises in the backbone of the yogi gets the knots in its path broken and reaching Sahasrara showers nectarine grace. The cutting off of Renuka's head denotes this. The name has an inner meaning like this. Uma Sahasram has submerged just at such a point. So, it could be construed that Nayana was going to get an experience of the like soon.

Having divined Mother's divine intention, Nayana bowed to the Mother's Will and went home.

Chapter 23

ARRIVAL OF F H HUMPHREYS

अयि कालं कियंतं दयसे पश्चिमस्याम् ।
इत इन्द्राणि पूर्वा मवलोकस्व दीनाम् ॥

O' Indrani! The mother of the anointed Queen Victoria, who was born as a partial manifestation of Thyself has brought glory to the Western people who served Thee.

अयि कालं कियंतं दयसे पश्चिमस्याम् ।
इत इन्द्राणि पूर्वा मवलोकस्व दीनाम् ॥

O' Indrani! How long will thou look at the West with kindness? Please look with kindness atleast now at the East which is much distressed.

न वयं पश्चिमस्याश्शचि याचाम नाशम् ।
कृपयैतां च पूर्वां निहताशामवाशाम् ॥

O' Mother Sachi! We do not ask for the destruction of the West. We ask Thee to save the East, which is in distress. This is our hopeful request.

- Indrani Sapta Sati

This invocation is the weapon that Nayana started to use to invoke Indrani Sakti in the world. The protection of righteousness is the goal. The purpose is the protection of the whole humanity. For this purpose Nayana invoked the mercy of all gods and he praised Virgin Mary also in the run.

कलया तदातिबलया कविता पुरुषस्य योगमखिलाम्ब विना ।
अखिलेश्वरप्रहिततेज इयं सुतजन्मने किल ददावनधा ॥

O' Mother of all! Indrani! Endowed with the very strong rays of Thee, the Lady Mary, without the necessity of a male, gave birth to the saviour of the world through the Lord.

सुररक्षकस्य मदयित्रि दृशां नररक्षकस्य जनयित्रिपरे।
कुलरक्षणाय कृतबुद्धिमिमं कुरुदक्ष मद्भुतपवित्रकथे ॥

O' Mother of such a saviour of man! Please make this being capable who is trying to save the country.

Prayers never go waste. Quick results ensue. There was a distinctive change in the police department. An humble gentleman, named F. H. Humphreys was posted as assistant Superintendent of Police to the Vellore division. In 1911 A.D. he came to India for the first time. As soon as he got down from the ship in Bombay, he was attacked by a virus fever and remained in Bombay for some time getting treatment. He used to get divine visions often. One evening he had the vision of a man with white robes, long-beard and looking like Christ. The man sat on his bed and soothed his body with his hands and Humphreys felt a shock like electricity run through his body and the fever left him.

Humphreys arrived in Vellore to join his post. He engaged a Munshi named Narasimhan to teach him Telugu language. One day Humphreys asked the Munshi whether he knew of any Mahatmas.

The Theosophical Society was propagating an idea that Maharshi Maitreya, who was the Messiah, would take birth for the welfare of the world. Being one who was used to philosophic thinking and a sadhaka of yoga, Humphreys heard this declaration of the theophists. He was very much keen on having the darshan of Hindu rishis.

But, Munshi thought differently. At that time there was a vigilance of the police on Nayana and Munshi

thought the question Humphreys put must be a ruse to catch Nayana and so, he told Humphreys that he did not know of any Mahatmas.

Next day Humphreys accosted Munshi saying that he saw Munshi's guru in his dream. He asked to see the photo of Munshi's guru. Munshi brought some photos of great souls and put the photo of his guru also concealed among the pile. But Humphreys picked out Nayana's photograph and said, 'Munshiji! Is this not your guru's photo? He appeared to me in Bombay and cured my illness. Please, take me to him. I want to have his darshan.'

Munshi was very much pleased at this and took him to Nayana and introduced him. Humphreys was overjoyed to have seen a real Hindu rishi for the first time. He discussed many philosophic matters with Nayana. Nayana recognized the spiritual hunger in Humphreys and took him to Sri Ramana Maharshi in November 1911 A.D. Describing Sri Ramana Humphreys wrote to 'The International Psychic Gazette' about his experience of Sri Ramana's darshan: 'The Maharshi is a man beyond description in his expression of dignity, gentleness, self-control and calm strength of conviction.'

The first foreigner who gained most through the darshan of Maharshi was this Englishman. He was the first person who gave to the West the message of Sri Ramana's teaching. Till then, the Divine who was showering her grace on the West has now, through the prayers of Nayana turned to the East to shower her blessings. This is the inception of the seed for the teaching of Ramana to spread far and wide. The Indian attitude is the welfare of all the worlds. That is the path of the rishis and that was Nayana's goal also.

Chapter 24

THE PILGRIMAGE TO GOKARNA

तीरे विपश्चिद्दूर पश्चिमाब्धे-
गोकर्णगां लोकय भद्रकर्णीम् ।
बुद्धिं शिवांसर्वमनोरथानां
सिद्धिं च यद्यस्ति मनोऽधिगन्तुम् ॥ 7-25-13

O' Scholar! To attain a well wishing attitude of mind and fulfillment of all desires too, please go and visit Gokarna on the West coast of India and have the darshan of Kali who goes by the name of Bhadrakarni in that Holy place.

- Uma Sahasram

Nayana performed the thread-investing ceremony (Upanayanam) of Mahadeva as soon as he completed 10 years of age. The boy gradually got used to the repitition of Gayatri Mantra and also a steady meditation in the heart. This might have been the grace of Bhagavan. Even Nayana was surprised at Mahadeva's steadfastness. 'He must have had some remnants of Karma left over from the previous birth. That is the cause of his birth', said Nayana about the boy. In 'Sri Ramana Gita', Nayana said, 'Mahadevasya Janani Dhirasya brahmavadinah'. This means that Nayana had declared indirectly that Mahadeva was a knower of Brahman. The boy's habits were also peculiar. He was the ordinary Mahadeva in day-time. After 12 midnight, he was in yoga always. If anybody asked him why he would not sleep, he used to answer, 'I sleep while sitting'. He never used to admit that he was in dhyana. From 12 P.M. to 4 A.M. he used to sit and exactly at 4 A.M.to start chanting Guru Stuti and other things till 6 A.M.

There is an adage, 'That which you think of before death, that will you become (in the next birth)'. All of us could understand Mahadeva's state only at the moment of his death. He was in full health. Suddenly, he said to his son, 'Purandara, Prana is leaving me! Well, let it go'. Immediately, he turned on his left side and said, 'Salutations to Mother, Father and guru. Bhagavan Ramana! Narayana! Siva, Siva!' and the life breath left him.

This happened in Kharagpur. Unless one is a great austere person (tapas) such a death will not occur. Bhagavan Ramana must have bestowed Hridaya Vidya on the great soul, Mahadeva.

एकेनाऽपि सुपुत्रेण तपोयुक्तेन साधुना ।
आह्लादितं कुलं सर्वं यथा चन्द्रेन शर्वरी ॥

Just as the Moon gives happiness to the whole night, a son (even one) good and austere gives happiness to the whole family.

Nayana, along with such a son and wife started for the pilgrim center of Gokarna in 1912 A.D. He planned to visit Kaladi, the birth place of Sri Adi Sankara first and then go to Gokarna by the sea. As planneed, visiting Kaladi first, he boarded the boat for Gokarna. It was a full moon day. The boat started at 6 P.M. and reached an island at 10 P.M. There was no human habitation on the shore. At a distance of a mile or so, there appeared to be a tope. The boatmen anchored the boat and got to the shore on a coir ladder. They were in the habit of drinking in that tope which the passengers did not know. So, some of the passengers also got down to the shore to enjoy the scenic beauty in the moon light. After half an hour there was a rumour and clamour that that place was Gokarna and hence the boat will not move any further. Some

passengers got down hurriedly. Meanwhile the boatman returned and told them that it was not Gokarna and hurried them to get on to the boat. There was some scampering and Mahadeva who was holding his father's hand was thrown back. Nayana and Visalakshi could board the boat. Mahadevan could not. He fell into the water, but a passenger lifted him, but shoved him back. As a result, nobody took notice of the boy. The boat started. Mahadevan was left on the shore. Neither the boatman, nor the passengers could hear his wailing and shouts.

It was a desert. Neither man nor beast was to be seen. If there was any habitation there would be the lights of lamps visible. There was not even that hope. The boy got frightened. For a moment, he considered walking towards the tope, but refrained. If the boat returned, father and mother would not know what to do. Tears rolled down the cheeks of the desolate child. His fright increased as the night progressed. Mahadeva was acquainted only with Bhagavan in his life. So, he sat on a sand dune and started repeating Gayatri mantra. He was immersed in dhyana within a short time. All around him sand rose up beat him. But the boy did not move or cry. Thirst or hunger did not touch the child. The boat returned on the morning of the third day. Nayana got down from the boat and was wonder struck at the boy's steadfastness in meditation. Due to the wind and sand, the boy had rash on his body. Nayana touched and awakened him. Mahadeva broke into tears at the sight of his father. Nayana soothed him with consoling words and prayed to Renuka to make him healthy.

छिन्नमात्मनः शिरः कराम्बुजेन बिभ्रती
वज्रपाणि मुख्यदेवगीयमानवैभवा ।
रेणुकाह्वया दयातरंगिणी भयापहा
धीरमौलिलालितेऽय मादधातु मामजा ॥

Though Nayana was a householder, he used to search for caves and mountains for residence. He did not like to stay in choultries like other pilgrims. He would do tapas in holy places. When he went on this search in Gokarna, he found a dilapidated Krishna Temple. Father, mother and son took up their abode in that temple. Nayana told Mahadeva that, as he was given the holy thread, he should go out and collect alms and feed the parents. Mahadeva agreed to this and collected food from only three houses as they were only three people.

Perhaps the Lord Gokarneswarana wanted to taste Nayana's scholarship and poetry! One day, a scholar arrived at Nayana's place and after talking for sometime with him found out that Nayana was a great Scholar. This news spread like wild fire in the city. In Gokarna there was a holy soul named Hosman Sastri who was running a Sanskrit school. The teachers of that school came to Nayana one day and asked him to come and have a look at the Vidyapeeth they were working in. Nayana agreed to their proposal.

Scholarship is of two kinds. One which can be got through learning books. The other is one which can be got through awareness in the heart. Nayana wove this concept into a sloka thus –

स्वाधीने हृदये वाणी सर्वमर्थं च पश्यति।
मनसा रञ्जिता वाणी व्यष्टेरनुभवं मितम्॥

When the word comes out of the awareness in the heart, it reveals everything. When it issues out of the mind, it is limited to the person's individual experience only. Hence a scholar is one who speaks with an intellect which is in contact with the heart. Such a one is a real scholar and poet.

In Gokarna, Ananta Sastri was a reputed scholar. He was a devotee of Vishnu. He was an adept in discoursing on Vishnu tatwa. One day, he happened to discuss with Nayana. It became impossible for him to withstand Nayana's flood of exposition when he started to discourse on Indra tatwa. Ananta Sastri understood that Nayana was a Maharshi like Veda Vasishta and accepting his defeat became Nayana's disciple.

The scholars of Gokarna came to understand that Nayana was a great astrologer. They requested Nayana to teach them the subtleties of Jyotisha. Nayana agreed to teach them in his own particular way the secrets of Jyotisha. So, he kept tapas in abeyance and took up teaching Jyotisha. Nayana wrote at that time some books on Jyotisha – Tribhava phala Chandrika, Nirnaya Samgraha and Laghu Samhita, etc.

Nayana was teaching like this for three months in Gokarna when he received a telegram informing him of his father's sudden illness. He immediately started for Kaluva Rai along with his family.

Chapter 25

FATHER'S DEMISE

तपोनिर्धूतपाप्मानः तथातथ्याभिधायिनः ।

वेदवेदांगतत्वज्ञाः ऋषयः परिकीर्तिताः ॥

Those are considered rishis who have washed away their sins with tapas, who speak truth always, who grasp the essence of Veda and Vedanga and act according to them.

Repetition of a mantra brings about the control of the mind. It purifies the mind. It reduces the qualities of Tamas and Rajas and increases Satwa. The Sakti which shines through such a pure mind is the Sakti of Paramatma, the Supreme. That is the Atma Sakti. It is also called tapas Sakti. Mantras are of two types. Vaidika and Tantrika. Though no special rules of conduct are necessary for Vaidic mantras, the Tantrics say they are necessary for Tantric worship. In such ritual worships like Sri Vidya rules and regulations are quite many. In the Vaishnava cult also many such things are followed. Anyway certain rules are necessary till the mind is controlled. There must be some mantra and a guru to impart that mantra which are necessary for a sadhaka's control of mind.

Under Nayana's inititation, people used to get immediate results. There was so much power in Nayana's speech and look. The Celestials used to walk along with him whenever Nayana walked. The caretaker devotee (Goddess) of the place used to appear before Nayana wherever he went and invited him to dwell in her domain. Nayana made Ramana speak which was a glorious feat. When he went to Sri Ramana, Nayana was

quite a ripe fruit. Bhagavan has sung in Akshara Mana Mala about ripeness of a being –

'What can you do with a fruit when it is too ripe and lost its taste? Please accept this fruit in time; otherwise, it will be spoilt.'

According to this prayer, a fruit will be spoilt when it is not used in proper time. In lieu of this, Bhagavan accepted Nayana as his devotee. Nayana worshipped Parasakti. The father Nrisimha Sastri gave him the mantram through which he could realize the Divine Mother. Unless he himself was a great worshipper, Sastri could not have moulded his son in this manner.

We are prone to be misguided by looking at the outer form, dress and the like. Hence we cannot distinguish between ordinary men and Vedapurushas. Nrisimha Sastri had this discriminative faculty since youth. The Sri Vidya tradition was in the family. Regular Sri Chakra Puja was done by many others. But Para Sakti showered Her grace on the family during Nrisimha Sastri's time. The unflinching devotion was the cause of this blessing. He worshipped the world itself as God in the method of Ramana's teaching - जगत ईशधीयुक्तसेवनम्.

'Look at the world as God'.

He stood up to struggle for his country seeing the confused plight of Nation's in the hands of foreign rule. Usually we understand by struggle for independence a revolution, a rebellion. But the name for this struggle in the spiritual parlance is tapas. Nrisimha Sastri did tapas with the aspiration of getting a son who would revive the tradition of the rishis of yore. Nayana was the result of his father's tapas.

Most of the people trust in the power of God. We see many people doing penances and sacrifices for the peace of the world. Divine Sakti only can transform the human

being to Divinity through inculcating unselfishness. The duty of Brahmins is to pray to God for the welfare of all the worlds. This can be seen in the benedictory mantra worshipped the world itself as God in the method of Ramana's teaching - सर्वे जनाः सुखिनो भवन्तु 'Let all the worlds be happy'. A rishi only can gather such divine power. Nayana must become such a rishi. With this aim, Nrisimha Sastri developed towards his son an attitude of a teacher rather than of a father. Hence he saw that Nayana was not limited to homely life. He got him educated in Sanskrit instead of English. Nayana was given the twelve lettered mantra for repetition. He gave him proper advice at the proper time and did not let him start tapas untimely. The worldly matters were not the field of knowledge of Nayana. The father made Nayana lead a tapasic life.

Because Nrisimha Sastry was steady in the Self, he could bring up his son in such a way. As a doctor, Nrisimha Sastry was doing unique service. As a seer of mantras, his attainment was unimaginable. He was behind the curtains and made Nayana perform on the stage of the world.

Mantraguru was the father for Nayana while Sri Ramana Maharshi was his Mahaguru. Nrisimha Sastry had the darshan of Sri Ramana in 1910. There was only silence between them. When they met Ramana declared, 'The real heart to heart talk is Silence'. Only silence reigned between those two gurus of Nayana. Nrisimha Sastry's eyes were filled with tears on receiving Bhagavan's grace.

'As an Indian, my duty is to save my country. I performed tapas and got a son. I dedicated that son to the world. The result is in the hands of the Lord.' This was Nrisimha Saastri's attitude.

Bhagavan looked at Nrisimha Sastry with a kind, loving, compassionate look. Nrisimha Sastry found the fulfillment of his life in that look. With a fully satisfied blissful heart he reached Kaluva Rai.

Till 1912, Sastri was perfoming the worship of the Divine Mother. After that he was prone to frequent fevers. A telegram was sent to Nayana who was in Gokarna. The elder son Bhima Sastry and the younger one Siva Rama Sastri were attending to the father. It took for Nayana one week to reach Kaluva Rai from Gokarana. The father passed away on 5-12-1912, and Nayana was sad that he could not come before the father's demise. Nayana meditated on his father in his own heart.

PART - III

Chapter 1

PERFORMANCE OF THE GREAT SACRIFICE

To remember Atma is not to involve in mistakes.
To forget Atma is to get involved in mistakes,
To remember is better than everything,
He who remembers you, Hari Haya, attains you,
Attaining you is to remain in one's Self,
Keeping hold on the Self is tapas,
Loosening hold on the Self is worldliness,
To be in the Self without any thought
Is the great State of being in you, O'Indra!

'One must worship Indra and study the Veda' is the great injunction. Nayana taught this path to the Scholars of Gokarna. Indra is the creator of the worlds. He is the effulgence that shines as 'I' in all beings of the world. He is the King of Devas; God of Yagna (sacrifice). The debt to the Devas can be redeemed through sacrifice, say the scriptures. The life, mind and senses are given to us by the Devas. Hence these are their manifestations in us. It is our duty to offer them to the Devas. This is called total offering of ourselves. Surrender and enquiry into the Self are the two methods of this offering. In the path of yogis, this sacrifice to the Devas is their own inner-sacrifice. It is possible through study of the Vedas also. Worship Indra who is shining in all beings as 'I'. Analyze the Vedas and through inner struggle attain the Truth', told Nayana to the scholars of Gokarna revealing the truth of Indra.

At one end of the town of Gokarna there is a mountain called Uma Maheswara mountain. There is a Vinayaka temple on the mountain surrounded by a beautiful garden. Nayana's family selected the temple as

their residence. Here Nayana started a sacrifice called Vedakosa mathanam (Analysis of the Vedas). It comprised of analysis of Vedas, proving of our debt to the Devas and explaining the various aspects of Agni (fire). Nayana and Amma (Visalakshi) were in meditation in day-time. There was a congregation of scholars and discussion among them in the evening. Again Nayana and Amma would be engaged in meditation. Mahadeva used to go into the town and collect alms in the shape of rice and dhals. Mother used to do the cooking. After some days Visalakshi thought the boy Mahadeva was getting too tired and so asked Nayana to find out if some other student can join Mahadeva in collecting alms.

There is always a divine purpose behind the thought of Mahatmas. The Gokarna Vidyapeth was started by one Ganesh Sastri. He had a title called 'Hosmane'. Vighneswara Bhadati was his son-in-law, who was titled Ganesh Bhatt. He was a very brilliant person, wise and humble. He wanted to run the Vidyapeeth on the best lines. For that he understood that he must educate himself thoroughly. He finished studying the Vedas and started learning the Kavyas (poetic works of great poets). He took mantra Diksha from a guru called Ramdas, learnt Hatayoga and liked to be in dhyana much time. At the advent of Nayana, Ganesh Bhatt's development in these was increasing more and more. God had to show a real guru to such a good aspirant. Sri Ramana used to say, 'First you meditate. At the right moment the guru himself will come to you and shower grace. You need not run about in search of a guru'. This saying of Sri Ramana became true in the case of Ganesh Bhatt. For this Amma's suggestion was the motivation.

One day Nayana told his disciples that he wanted a student who would be helpful to Mahadeva. At once Ganesh Bhatt came forward and introduced himself in

the traditional method and touched Nayana's feet with his head. With great pleasure Nayana lifted him and kissed his forehead. As soon as Nayana who was always repeating Vedas and doing Namajapa touched the boy's forehead with his lips inner faculties of Ganesh Bhatt started blossoming in full. Nayana saw that the boy would become a great yogi and started calling him DaivaRata, which became his permanent name later.

In the valley of Sahyadri at a distance of 4 Kilometers from Gokarnam, there is a small village called 'Sannabela' on the Sea-shore. The Dharma Parishat of Gokarna planned to perform a sacrifice in Sannabela village. As the Ritwiks of the sacrifice knew Nayana to be a great tapaswi who was analyzing Vedas, they wanted him to be Adhyaksha (Supervisor) of the sacrifice. An ashram was constructed in Sannabela for Nayana's residence. At the appointed time of the opening of the sacrifice, Nayana was received with the chanting of mantras and a Purna Kumbham by Brahmins. As the intended sacrifice was a very big one, many people from far-off states attended it. Appu Sastri and Kalyana Rama Sastri also arrived from Vellore. As God would have it, as soon as Appu Sastri arrived in Gokarna, he got jaundice.

As soon as Nayana stepped into the ashram, he prayed to the local guardian deity, Vana Durga. Immediately she graced him with her darshan and Nayana prayed to her to let the sacrifice be a success and be the guardian and 'Annapurna supplier' of food to all those who attended the sacrifice. She smiled gracefully at Nayana. On the next day early in the morning, Vana Durga herself appeared to Amma as an old lady and gave her some leaves telling her that the juice of the leaves will cure Appu's jaundice. According to her instruction, Amma gave the juice to Appu and he was healed of the jaundice within a short time.

In the month of Phalguna of 1913, the sacrifice was started with a thousand Hotrus and three thousand helpers homam was being conducted. Nayana as the supervisor was guiding the sacrifice. There reigned a divine atmosphere all through the area of sacrifice. Guests were given all amenities and were sumptuously fed. Discussions by scholars were conducted. Nayana's speeches were enthralling and through their impact many people got divine experiences.

This sacrifice became the final reward of the Veda Kosa Madhana tapas that Nayana started. Nayana composed 'Yoga Sara Gitam' compiling the yoga vidyas of the Vedas and revealing the mystic meanings in them he said –

बहुलयोगि वाङमधनतोऽमृतम् ।
अनुभवक्षमं तदिद माहृतम् ।।

'This ambrosia of Yoga Sara' which is the essence of the prouncements of many seers and which can be experienced is given out to you'. Nayana became silent after this pronouncement. The assembled nobles (people) saw Veda Vasishta in the glorious individual Kavya Kanta Ganapati Muni. On the tenth day of the bright half of Chaitra month the grand sacrifice came to conclusion.

Chapter 2

THE SAMATATTAWA DARSINI

संकर्षणस्यांशमनन्यशक्ति मनंतनामान ममु नमामि।
रामं तृतीयं रमणीयगात्रं रमानिवासाननपुंडरीकम्॥

'I bow to Balarama who is the partial manifestation of Samkarshana, of infinite power, of the name Ananta, of a beautiful form and a face like a lotus which is the seat of Lakshmi Devi'.

- Tattwa Ghanta Satakam

Those were the days when Nayana was living in Arunachala after having had the darshan of Sri Ramana. The Saiva Siddhanta Sabha arranged a great meeting in Arunachala. They came and requested Nayana to preside over the function. Nayana would never say no to anything. So, he agreed to preside without thinking much. The news was broadcast over the whole town.

There are many cults in Hinduism like Dwaita, Visishtadwaita, Advaita, Saiva and many others. All the cults teach the oneness of God. If it is limited to this worship of one's own cult, nothing is lost. But the difficulty arises when each cult declares its own belief as the absolute truth and all others false. The war of Palanadu in Andhra Pradesh was the evidence of the results of this dangerous attitude. Nayana's nature was very innocent. He would say outright what he is convinced of and what he had darshan of. But Nayana came to know only on the morning of the function that there were some particular procedures to be followed in the case of this Saiva Siddhanta. And whatever a disciple utters would be considered as the guru's word. So,

whatever Nayana spoke would be Ramana's word. Tamil Nadu is the repertory of devotees of Siva. The great Saiva devotees were called 'Nayanars'. Bhagavan was a great devotee of Siva. Hence Nayana went to Bhagavan that morning and asked, 'Bhagavan! Saiva Siddhanta Sabha asked me to lecture on Saiva Siddhanta. Till now I do not know anything about it. What is this Siddhanta?'

Bhagavan smiled at Nayana's predicament. Immediately he asked for the book Siva Jnana Bodha to be brought and pointed out the twelve main aphorisms and gave a concise commentary on them.

Having thus possessed of guru's grace, Nayana gave a superb lecture in Tamil to the astonishment of all the audience. After the meeting, Nayana went to Sri Ramana and told him, 'Bhagavan, what I spoke today was all your grace only. The Saiva Siddhanta which I never studied became a 'gooseberry in the hand'. This was an evidence of Nayana's humility and dedication to Bhagavan.

Another such happening occurred in Udupi. Udupi Kshetra was a stronghold of Vaishnavism. Amma and Nayana went to Udupi in 1913. Nayana had the darshan of the famous Udupi Sri Krishna in his temple and composed extempore, ten slokas on the ten incarnations of Vishnu which are called Dasavataras. The temple authorities were astonished at the grandeur of the poems. These slokas were later printed as 'Dasavatara Gitam' in the book, 'Gitamala'.

Near Udupi, there is a Kshetra called Badabandeshwar. It is a Balarama Kshetra. It is full of hills and streams. Seeing the peaceful atmosphere of this place, Nayana wanted to do tapas there. He kept Amma in the house of Vasudeva Sastri's daughter in Udupi and himself went to Badabandeshwar and chose for tapas a little cave with a small stream nearby. He was in samadhi

for 15 days there. His clothes became dirty due to wind and sand. His body became weak due to lack of food. Suddenly, a very strong man appeared before him with Abhaya mudra. Nayana understood the form to be Balarama and wanted to get up to great him, but was too weak to get up. The youth put his hand on Nayana's back and immediately there was an electric energy passing through Nayana's back and strength passed into Nayana. The youth took Nayana to the stream and got him bathed. He went to the town and told someone to get food to Nayana and serve him. After that he was not seen anymore.

From then on the authorities of the Mutt in Badabandeshwar looked after Nayana's wants. Nayana stayed five more days in the cave and completing his schedule of tapas came over to the town. Immediately the Vaishnava community surrounded him and arranged for a meeting soon. Nayana was requested to speak.

Nayana was seated on the stage. He closed his eyes and meditated on Balarama who appeared to him on the hill. He started to speak. A profound theory issued out of his mouth which was beyond Vaishnava and Saiva theories. The lecture became a harmonization of all theories. Nayana's dissemination spread over 92 slokas. All the founders of all the cults appeared before Nayana's mind's eye.

ऋषिभिर्वामदेवाद्यैर्यद्दृष्टं मंत्रदर्शिभिः ।
तस्य शास्त्रस्य सारोऽयं मया संगृह्य कीर्तितः ॥

'I have given out concisely what was revealed to the Seers of mantras, Vamadeva and others'.

Nayana invoked all the Acharyas, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Vallabha and Sri Kanta in a sloka separately and concluded saying that aspirants can attain Brahman through service, yoga and Jnana.

The audience felt as though all the acharyas appeared on the stage in the one form of Nayana and were immensely happy.

Suddenly a boy came out of the audience and held Nayana's feet and said, 'Lord! My father died. I am a Brahmin boy. My mother changed her faith to Christianity. I love very much Vedic rituals. The pundits here refused to perform Upanayanam to me. Please give Brahmopadesam to me. I will follow the right path with all sincerity. Nayana immediately called for the Dharma Parishad (assembly of ritual authority) and told them that fitness for rituals exists in the sincere desire of a person and so they should perform the upanayanam to the boy. The Parishad agreed and did the Upanayanam.

'Balarama is the Rama that bestows the knowledge of weaponry'. अस्त्रविद्या प्रदातः रामः ॥ The Indian way of life is tied up with this concept. Sri Rama, Dasaratha's son, Bhargava Rama, Renuka's son, and Balarama, were always worshipped by the Hindus, said Nayana. And Skanda, Bala Rama and Parasu Rama are the partial incarnations of the same deity. They are tapaswis and gurus, who are steady in the Heart (Hridaya Vidya), and if one is seen, the other two also would be seen, said Nayana. He also said that these are the founders of Hridaya Vidya and one of them, Skanda incarnated as Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Amma asked Nayana what benefit he had through the darshan of Balarama. Nayana told her that he got the power of weaponry and gained a modern theoretical view. Balarama's strength is going to save Indians in their fight for independence, he said.

This new harmonizing method's revelation fructified into the 'Tattwa Ghanta Satakam' that Nayana formulated. This, it seemed was a favourite piece of poetry to Sri Ramana.

वेदांतशास्त्रशतकान् सकलान्विचार्य
प्राचामृगागमदृशां मतमादधानः ।
क्षेत्रे फणीश्वरकलाजनितस्य पुंसो
घंटाशतं गणपतिः कविराडकार्षीत् ॥

Having gone through all philosophies, according to the light of the Rig Vedic Rishi's, in the Kshetra of Balarama, who was a manifestation of Adishesha, the poet Ganapati created this 'Tattwa Ghanta Satakam'.

Chapter 3

THE DARSHAN OF DAHARAGUHESA

त्वदीया सा शक्तिस्सकलजगदन्तेऽप्यनलसा
पुरा कार्यस्यान्ते तनयमयि हित्वा नृपरिपुम्।
अविक्षत्काकुत्स्थं दशमुखकुलोन्माथविधये
सहस्रांशुं हित्वा शशिनमिव धस्त्रे गलति भा॥ 7-27-11

O' Mother Renuka! Having finished destroying all the world and concluded the work of destroying the Kshtriyas through Parasu Rama thy power possessed Sri Rama, leaving aside thine own son Parasu Rama, for the destruction of the whole force of Ravana.

- Uma Sahasram

Once a devotee asked Sri Ramana, 'Swamy! What would have happened if, after having received the whole essence of Gita, Arjuna refused to fight?' Sri Bhagavan replied, 'That unified power which brought all of them to the war front would have forced Arjuna to fight'. This reveals that the power of the avatars does all things. This is revealed by Nayana in the above sloka.

Sri Rama and Parasu Rama were contemporaries. The purpose of the avatar of Parasu Rama was to destroy the Kshatriyas who became arrogant through possessing vast material power and reveal to the world that the power of tapas is greater than mere physical strength. Sri Rama's goal was to destroy the whole race of demonic forces.

Puranas tell us that Parasu Rama came in great anger on hearing that Siva's bow was broken by Sri Rama. He accosted Sri Rama when he started home and in the

encounter Parasu Rama's strength entered into Sri Rama through Parasu Rama's bow which was given to Sri Rama to test the strength of Sri Rama. But Parasu Rama was the avatar of Kartikeya. He was always centered in the Self. Through the grace of his mother, he possessed Kundalini Vidya. The power that is possessed by such a Maharshi would be Prachanda Chandi or Krittika. This power is necessary to protect Dharma and so it accrued to Sri Rama from Parasu Rama and was useful in the destruction of demonic forces.

Parasu Rama was born as a partial manifestation of Kartikeya and graced Sri Rama. In the same way, Bala Rama was born with the power of Ananta and helped Sri Krishna, say the seers of truth. Nayana has declared Sri Ramana also as the avatar of Kartikeya. The way that Parasu Rama appeared to Nayana once again was very strange.

There are two Kshetras of the name of Gokarna in India. One is the Kshetra in the state of Karnataka. The Lingam in this Kshetra was installed by Ravana, as the story goes. But it was god Ganapati, in truth, who installed it there. To get Atmalinga means to get Atmajnana, Self-knowledge, which is not possible with the aid of the ego, and possessiveness. That is the cause of Ravana's failure to get Atmalingam. This truth in the story of Ravana's attempt to get Atmalingam was this. There is another Gokarna Kshetra in Andhra Pradesh. On Mahendragiri hill in Srikakulam district, there is a temple for Gokarneswara. This hill is located in the small Zamindari of Mandasa. This is a Kshetra of Parasurama. It is believed that the Pandavas of Mahabharata had been in this place. Mahendragiri is quite high from the sea level. It is infested by wild beasts as there is a dense forest on this hill. There are some villages of mountain tribes around the hill. Only healthy people can climb this

hill. Others need dolis, a sort of conveyance made up of bamboo poles.

Gokarneswara is the Lord of this hill. Every year a festival is conducted here on Sivaratri. The Mandasa King's family worships Siva on this day. When people climb the hill, they take torches along with them and beat drums so that wild beasts are kept at a distance.

Between 1913 and 1915, Nayana travelled much in all parts of the country. He participated in scholars' meets in many places like Secunderabad, Kumta, Karkala, etc. He travelled in the North along with Amma. At the end he went to Mandasa and met his old friend, the Raja of Mandasa. Nayana camped in Mandasa at the request of the Raja. Nayana did tapas again in Bhuvaneswar during November and December of 1915. Nayana used to say that every rock in Bhuvaneswar was the form of Eswara just as they say that every particle of sand in Brindavan had been sanctified by the touch of Sri Krishna's feet. Bhuvaneswar was considered as a great cemetery, the abode of Siva. Nayana wanted to rewrite Uma Sahasram in that place. As Nayana's memory was very keen he started writing Uma Sahasram as much as he could recollect. They were arranged in 'Stabakas' or bouquets of slokas. He left empty spaces in between them. May be he left some places empty where he did not remember a sloka.

In 1916, Nayana's favourite disciple, Daivarata came to Mandasa to see his guru. Some disciples used to come from Arunachala also. Meanwhile Sivaratri approached. The temple on the Mahendragiri started to be decorated. With great curiosity, Daivarata asked the King of Mandasa, 'O' King! I am surprised to hear that Gokarneswara has manifested on Mahendragiri. Is it also, like the lingam in Gokarna, an Atmalingam?'

The King replied, 'We do not know who installed this lingam. People say that it is self-manifested. But I know that my ancestors built this temple'. Nayana, while he was hearing this conversation with closed eyes, opened his eyes and said, 'It is installed by Kumara Swamy. It was worshipped by Parasu Rama'.

On Sivaratri, arrangements were made for the King and his family to climb the hill. Amma, Nayana and Daivarata started along with them. As soon as he entered the temple, Nayana's mind went introvert. In time the worship of Gokarneswara was completed. Nayana went near the lingam and touched it with his hand. He felt something like electricity pass through his spine. After the worship, all the people came out of the temple and walked about on the mountain. Nayana and Daivarata went a little distance away from the crowd and looked around. Nayana said, 'Daivarata, this place reminds me of Padai Veedu. Parasu Rama must have travelled around this place. Even now he will appear to tapswis. Look at the shape of this mountain. It looks in its southern portion like a cow lying down. Mother Renuka gave Kundalini Vidya to Parasu Rama. Egotism, possessiveness and sense-desire are the enemies of an aspirant. Mother Renuka is the power that cuts off the nadi grandhis and makes one separated from the head (the power that dissolves the mind). Parasu Rama was Kartikeya himself who knew the real nature of the Self through the breaking of Rudra-grandhi. This lingam is a lingam that Parasu Rama worshipped. I will do tapas in such a holy place as this'. Daivarata prostrated to Nayana and begged to allow him also to do tapas along with Nayana. Nayana smiled and touched Daivarata's head and said, 'Let it be'.

Nayana told Amma, 'I will do tapas in the presence of Dahara Guhesa. You please go to the town along with the family of the King. Daivarata has decided to stay

with me. Food can be sent once in three days. The King will see to that. You need not worry on that account. Please permit me to engage in tapas'. Amma was used to such things. So she agreed immediately. The King was some what troubled. 'There are many wild beasts around here. What will you do?', he asked. Nayana reassured the King saying that wild beasts do not harm tapaswins. By the evening all the people went down. Nayana and Daivarata remained on the hill.

Near the Gokarneswara temple, Nayana selected a nice slab to sit for meditation. Soon he went introverted and Daivarata became the protector. Twenty days went by in intense tapas. His intensity of Tapas can be gauged by the following verse :-

नभसः शीर्षद्वारा प्रवहन्तीं य इह विग्रहे शक्तिम्।
अनुसन्दधाति नित्यं कृतिनस्तस्येतरैरलं योगैः॥ 1-4-8

To those meritorious people who, with a steady application of the mind see continuously the power that descends from the sky into the body through the top of the head, no other methods of yoga are necessary.

- Uma Sahasram

Day to day Nayana's countenance gained radiance. On the twentieth day, a form started out of Dahara Guhesa, neared Nayana and looked at him with extreme grace. That form had an axe in his hand, wore white robes and looked like a rishi. He was Parasu Rama of course. A ray of light issued out of his forehead and touched Nayana's head and entered his body. Nayana's body immediately felt electric energy run all through his whole body.

With this experience, Nayana stopped Tapas. Daivarata saw an aura behind Nayana's head and

understood that his tapas was successful. 'Daivarata! I have attained Parasu Rama's grace. Shall we go home?' asked Nayana and both of them went home. It was the first time that Daivarata saw his guru doing tapas. He prostrated to Nayana with all devotion.

The King's family and the people of Mandasa saw this radiance of Nayana and wondered at Nayana's tapas-sakti.

Chapter 4

THE BIRTH OF SRI RAMANA GITA

महर्षिं रमणं नत्वा कार्तिकेयं नराकृतिं ।
मतं तस्य प्रसन्नेन ग्रंथेनोपनिबध्यते ॥

'Bowing to Sri Ramana Maharshi,, who is the Lord Kartikeya born as a human being, this, his teaching, is being brought out as a book with a pure mind.'

- Sri Ramana Gita

He who has realized the Truth is a rishi. He is a guide to seekers of Truth. He reveals the method in which he had realized the Truth. Those who have faith in him follow him. The modern concept is प्रत्यक्षं परमं प्रणाणं. 'We believe only that which we can see', which means the modern generation believes only that which can be seen. Sri Ramana is an acceptable rishi to the modern generation also, because his teaching is beyond any cult, creed or religion and time and space. It accords with the Vedas. Darshanam means experiential knowledge. It is called Vidya also. In the Vedas there have been prescribed many Vidyas to know the Self. Sri Ramana's darshan is called Vaiswanara Vidya and also Hridaya Vidya. To search for the real 'I' and being steady in the knowledge of it is called Vaiswanara Vidaya as it can be only in the Vaiswanara. The heart is the Supreme Akasa or Daharam. Rishis declared that Daharam is Atma. To be always merged in this Daharam is Atma Nishta. Dahara Vidya is Hridaya Vidya. Sri Ramana had experiential knowledge of this Vidya.

But, Maharshi was fond of Silence. To propagate his teaching in word, the scribe must also be a Jnani. Lord Ganapati himself became the scribe when Vyasa started

imparting knowledge. Here Nayana became the scribe for Ramana's teaching to be perpetuated. Nayana started in 1913 itself to bring out Sri Ramana's teaching into a book form. On 29-12-1913, Nayana asked Bhagavan some questions as would benefit seekers and collected the answers of Bhagavan. He rendered these questions and answers into 17 slokas and made it into a Chapter called Upasana Pradhanya Nirupanam.

हृदयकुहरमध्ये केवलं ब्रह्ममात्रं
ह्यहमहमिति साक्षादात्मरूपेण भाति।
हृदि विश मनसा स्वं चिन्वता मज्जता वा
पवनचलनरोधा दात्मनिष्ठो भव त्वं॥

Till 1917, nothing further was thought of. When Nayana reached home after having the darshan of Parasu Rama on Mahendragiri, a disciple, Ramanadha Brahmachari, came from Arunachalam to see Nayana. He showed a sloka to Nayana which was composed by Bhagavan (Sloka 20) :

In the cave of the heart the Absolute Brahman shines as Atma vibrating as, 'I', 'I'. Either by searching for it through the mind, or by controlling the life force, or by merging the mind in the heart, reside steadily in the heart. – Eka sloki.

This verse is the essence of Sri Ramana's teaching. In 1917, a scholar called Jagadiswara Sastry started to compose a verse enunciating Ramana's teaching and wrote the first line, 'Hridaya Kuhara Madhye', and could not proceed any further. He brought the unfinished verse to Bhagavan and Bhagavan completed the verse. This verse finally reached Nayana.

Nayana was very glad to see the verse. In the year 1917, he, with wife Visalakshi, went to Arunachala to have Bhagavan's darshan. Hearing the news that Nayana

was in Arunachala, Daivarata arrived from Gokarnam. Kapali Sastry and some other disciples also arrived. All of them were scholars. All of them used to gather every day in front of Bhagavan and ask certain questions. The all compassionate Bhagavan used to answer them. This went on from 7-7-1917 like a great yajna. Nayana codified all the questions into 'Sri Ramana Gita'. Sri Bhagavan said of this incident in his own words – 'In 1913, Nayana asked some questions and got the answers for them. As the ideas were strongly imprinted in his mind when somebody asked something, he would create a sloka extempore and say it is in Ramana Gita at such and such a place in such and such a Chapter. All this was done when he did not even put pen on paper for Ramana Gita. When he started to speak authoritatively, nobody could counter him. He used to be quite emotional. After doing like this for a long time, he wrote this Gita (Ramana Gita) now.'

One devotee expressed a doubt, "Bhagavan! What would Nayana have done if somebody asked, "Where is that Gita?" Bhagavan smiled and said, 'Who would have dared to oppose him or argue with him? Who was there who had such courage?' His demeanor was so authoritative that none could counter him. After creating Ramana Gita also he used to quote some slokas extempore as examples and say they were also in Ramana Gita. When somebody pointed out that it is not, he would say it was in Maha Ramana Gita. Perhaps he planned Maha Ramana Gita also. But now it happened otherwise.'

Sri Ramana Gita is a Yoga Sastra adjunct to Bhagavad Gita. There are 18 Chapters in it. They start with upasana (worship) and end with glorifying the greatness of Siddhas. It is a scripture which can remove the doubts of aspirants. Elders say that this work is useful in everyway to householders, ascetics, sadhus, Brahmavadins, Sankhyas, Indians and foreigners alike.

The questioners in this book are not ordinary men.

1. Daivarata – His name was Gajanana. He was Nayana's disciple. A vedic scholar. A great devotee who wrote, 'Vibhaktyashtakam' on Sri Ramana.
2. Yoganatha Yatindra – Sankaranarayana before taking Sanyas.
3. Kapali Sastri – Nayana's disciple. Commentator of Sat-darshana. Sanskrit scholar, poet and devotee of Sri Ramana.
4. Visalakshi – Nayana's wife. Versed in Sri Vidya worship. A great tapaswini who had Tara mantra siddhi.
5. Bharadwaja (Karshni) – Son of Sri Krishna Iyer. He was an overseer by name, Vaidyanath Iyer.
6. Bharadwaja Vaidarbhi – Native of Ongole, Andhra Pradesh. Name Chivukula Venkata Sastri, 'Upanishad Brahmendra Saraswati' after Sanyas.
7. Amritanatha Yatindra – A Kerala native.

What a combination of great personalities were they who brought about such a great work!

गलंती गंगेयं विमलतरगीतैव महतो
नगाधीशाच्छ्रीमद्रमण रूपाज्जनिमती ।
पथो वाणीरूपात्गणपतिकवेर्भक्तहृदयं
समुद्रं संयाति प्रबलमलहारिण्यनुपदम् ।।

'This pure Ganges, named Sri Ramana Gita, is born in the Himalaya, which was the great Ramana Maharshi and flows through the words of the poet Ganapati Muni, purifying the many evil elements, to merge in the ocean of the hearts of the devotees.'

Sri Ramana Maharshi was not very much versed in the Sanskrit language. With Nayana's contact, he came to understand Sanskrit. Once Nayana asked Sri Ramana to compose some slokas in Sanskrit. 'I do not know Sanskrit. How can I compose?' Sri Ramana asked Nayana. Nayana then taught Sri Ramana the metrre Aryavritta. As a result, Sri Ramana composed five slokas, 'Arunachala Pancha Ratna Stuti' on Arunachaleswar. Nayana was extremely pleased with these slokas and added them as the invocatory slokas to Ramana Gita.

When this was done, Pranavananda approached Nayana and asked him to compose an epilogue to Ramana Gita on Sri Ramana guru. Nayana agreed and composed 'Guru Gitam'. Though the context of the compositions varied, all these became adjuncts to Ramana Gita.

Chapter 5

DESCENT OF THE NEW VEDA

वेदाः सर्वे परावाणी शुद्धज्ञानमयाहि ते ।
अंतरस्यात्मनः साक्षात्ते स्युः शब्दमयं महः ॥

'As the Vedas are the Paravak (Divine words), they are pure knowledge. They are the light of the Atma in the form of words'.

- Viswa Mimamsa, Ganapati Muni

Pranava is the base of all the sounds. Hence 'Om' or Pranava is called Sabda Brahma. Even before the sound 'Om' is formed the sound exists. In that state it is Sakti or Energy. In the language of the mantras it is called Suddha Chit or Pure Knowledge. That is the Swara or sound form in the Vedas. All knowledge has this sound as its source. He who masters this sound is the master of all knowledge. The worship of sound is worship of God Himself.

He who can envision the Para sound is a rishi. It is possible through tapas. Vedas are Paravak. As they are the Absolute Truth and Knowledge, they are infinite. The Knowledge of Vedas is the knowledge of the Truth. A rishi becomes a medium of the revelation of Truth. Paravak is beyond the senses, mind and intellect. A rishi in deep meditation realizes the Truth and suddenly expresses his experience in word form. That becomes the Veda mantra.

Veda mantras are infinite. They are not limited to a place or time or beings. They are eternal. But language has limitation as we know. So the Eternal Truth of the

Vedas becomes experiential knowledge. The language in them becomes silence. The inner meaning of the pronouncement, 'Real heart to heart talk is silecne' is this. But for the welfare of the world, the Truth of the Vedas has to be brought out into language. In that process, the concept becomes permanent while the language becomes impermanent. Hence the elders say that the Vedas declare the Truth indirectly. Everybody knows that Vedantins are fond of indirect teaching.

The seers of old have declared the Vedas as standards in life in lieu of the welfare of the world. Nayana said that such a vedic vision is possible even now. Nayana declared:-

1. The Vedas are sound-oriented mantras. They give knowledge of God and spiritual experiences. They can be revealed through tapas and insight.
2. The Veda is the best knowledge of the Brahman. It can be acquired through experience and sadhana. The word which is heard through tapas reveals the knowledge of Brahman.
3. When a rishi expends all his energies and knowledge for the sake of Truth, it reveals itself in his heart. That is called a revelation.
4. The Vedas are an unbroken sound in Truth. They are endless. The rishis can see them in tapas.
5. The Truth is revealed according to the fitness of the sadhaka.
6. Just as the rishis had in the past, even now, Veda-darshan is possible.
7. Through tapas and insight, Truth can get revealed. Just in the same way mantra darshan also is possible.

Not only did Nayana give out this teaching, but also he initiated the new Vedic darshan. The wonderful incident happened like this –

In 1917, Nayana left Mandasa and reached Arunachala. Amma also followed him. Hearing that Nayana was in Arunachala, Daivarata also arrived in Arunachala. Nayana introduced Daivarata to Bhagavan. Daivarata was very much impressed by Bhagavan's Sahajanishta (remaining permanently in Samadhi) and himself wanted to achieve it. Nayana understood the disciple's aspiration.

The three of them reached Padai Veedu which was a favourite place of tapas for Nayana. Renuka looked very much pleased at Nayana's arrival. 'Daivarata! We have decided to do tapas at Mother's feet', Nayana told Daivarata. 'O' Guru! I am blessed to have darshan of Sri Ramana by your grace. Bless me that I may do tapas in your presence', said Daivarata. As if to indicate Renuka's pleasure at hearing those words, a flower from her feet dropped and the priest gave it to them.

A small hut was constructed and on the 9th day of the Bhadrapada month, the three of them started to do tapas. Daivarata was progressing visibly at a fast rate. A strange wonderful radiance was seen around him. Nayana noticed it one day when Daivarata was in deep Samadhi. Some words were heard coming out of him indistinctly. Nayana did not show much interest in them at first. But on the second day also there issued some mantra sounds from Daivarata's mouth. It was strange and so Nayana went near and carefully heard what the sounds were. They looked like Vedamantras. Surprised, Nayana asked Renuka, 'Mother! Why are you doing like this?'

Then he understood that Renuka was Vedamata. The total Sakti of the Vedamata was showering grace on Daivarata. To Nayana's eyes there appeared some message

in the Mother's contenance. Nayana with his inner vision understood Mother's message and started to write a new Veda on the spot. He praised the Mother first :

वेदमाता भगवती शब्दब्रह्मात्मिका परा।
तत्वं प्रबोधयत्वाशु लेखिनी ब्रह्मचोदिनी ॥

'The Mother of Vedas in the form of the word is inspiring me to write the Truth of Brahman. May She bless us to attain the Truth quickly!'

Immediately Nayana started to write down what was issuing out of Daivarata. Let us hear from his own words how this yajna (Divine activity) was performed –

'Valuable words should be written down even if children utter them. Due to the great respect I have for Vedas and my great love for my disciple. I have started to arrange the mantras issuing from Daivarata, knowing them as Chando-darshanam.

Some words were coming out fast indistinctly. Some were incomplete. Ignoring the indistinct words, I picked up the distinct and complete words and wrote them down. Intending these mantras to benefit people in general, the description of the gods in the mantras was put in an order and the mantras were divided into Mantra Suktas and Anuvakas and a commentary was written by me to the whole work.

Daivarata was only 25 years old. He did not have much scholarship in Sanskrit. But he practiced yoga since childhood. This discipline of yoga was useful in doing tapas. The result had fructified into the work 'Chandodarshanam'. It is strange that Daivarata had revelation of Vedamantras like the rishis of yore. These mantras are similar to the mantras of Rig Veda. The sounds, riks and the truths can be thoroughly studied by people. I hope this work is a book for study for the wise, the seekers for truth and the critics too.

I have great love for Daivarata. He is a yogi, tapswi, knower of Truth and one who had revealed Vedamantras. His behaviour, education, tapas and yoga reminds one of the rishis of yore. Hence I proclaim that he is a Brahmarshi.'

This great auspicious work was started on the full moon of the month Kartikam and finished on the full moon of the month Magham. This work 'Chando darsanam' is considered as a new Veda. The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has published it. An English translation is also published. Daivarata with great humility said that it was Nayana who made him pronounce these Veda mantras.

Nayana proclaimed his guru Ramana as Maharshi. He declared his disciple Daivarata as Brahmarshi. We have heard of many who have eulogized their gurus, but we have not heard of anybody who eulogized his disciple like Nayana. This shows Nayana's greatness. As Ramana says, 'the mind of a Jnani is Brhaman' and hence a Jnani sees only Brahman in guru or sishya.

वेदद्रष्टा नु भगवान् ब्रह्मर्षिः ब्रह्मणस्पतिः ।
वाचं संचोदयत्वाशु वेदार्थस्य प्रकाशने ॥

'May Bhagavan Brahmanaspati, who had grasped the Vedas, shine through my word to reveal the truth of the Vedas.'

Nayana seems to have become Brahmanaspati through this work, 'Chando darsanam'.

Chapter 6

THE POWER OF WEAPONS

अस्त्रं मम भवध्वंसाय रटतां।
सुत्राम तरुणी श्री मातरसतां॥

'O' Mother Indrani! Sri Mata! Please shine as my weapon for the destruction of the evil doers. (Please become my weapon).'

- Indrani Saptasati

Ours is the atomic age. The Super-powers are thinking of storing atomic weapons in the sky and using them when necessity arises. Critics of these powers are parading this thought and talking of peace. Space war, sky war are captions of some articles published in news-papers. The main thing in these destructive weapons is power. As long as it rests in inanimate things, there is no danger of any sort. Hence our ancestors kept this power under check. Atomic power is not something unknown to them. They acquired power through tapas and used it for the good of the world. They had the power to destroy the whole world with their power, but they made peace with nature and lived peacefully. This is one of the questions that Maharshi Valmiki, who authored Ramayana asked Narada Maharshi :-

आत्मवान् को जितक्रोधो द्युतिमान् कोऽनसूयकः।
कस्य बिभ्यति देवाश्च जातरोषस्य संयुगे॥

'Who is the man who is self-controlled, has conquered anger, is radiant, is without jealousy, and is feared even by the gods when he gets angry in war?'

This shows that conquering anger means to deploy anger with discrimination. When those lovers of peace show anger, it turns out for the good of the world. When the Maharshi Viswamitra and Durvasa got angry, their curses and hard words always turned out to be good to the world. When Sri Krishna got angry at Bhishma and took up his weapon, Chakra to kill Bhishma, his action denotes his commitment to protect righteousness.

Nayana who followed the path of these rishis acquired weapons. His goal was to free the country from foreign yoke. His ambition was to restore Vedic culture in India. God blessed him with a great guru like Ramana Maharshi. Through this blessing, Nayana could bring out the great work Sri Ramana Gita which was a great philosophic treatise, acceptable to all religions. But can the society be uplifted in a trice when it is steeped in foolish orthodoxy, traditions and customs? There would not have arisen so many religions, creeds and cults in this country if such a thing was possible. Nayana in his own way used his weapon to destroy foolish orthodoxy. Strangely this incident happened in Sri Ramana's presence.

Palani Swamy was a Malayalee who was serving Sri Ramana since a long time. He was a sanyasi and not much educated. He started serving Sri Ramana when Ramana was called Brahmana Swamy. Palani wanted to know the truth of the scriptures. He used to bring some books from the library in the town and read them with ever so many mistakes. Bhagavan understood his desire and used to take those books, read them and explain the contents to Palani. Bhagavan used to say that he read the scriptures only at that period. This man Palani had some foolish ideas which used to cause some unpleasant happenings some times.

Once in 1914, Seshadri Swamy came to Sri Ramana. He took food along with Sri Ramana. While eating, the

food particles were strewn hither and thither. Palani got angry at Seshadri Swamy's method of eating. 'If you are going to eat in this way, I will not give you food any further', said Palani. Seshadri Swamy did not mind Palani's admonition. But Palani said further, 'Seshadri is not a Jnani'. Seshadri was not perturbed, but he never again came for food. Everybody felt sad at Palani's misdemeanour.

After completing the new Veda in February 1918, Nayana came to Sri Ramana along with his wife. As soon as they entered Arunachalam, they went up the hill to Skandashramam where Ramana was staying. Nayana was talking with Sri Ramana about Chando-darsanam for long into the night. Everybody was listening raptly to Nayana's narration and it became dark before any body noticed.

Nayana was rapt in talking to Sri Ramana and did not notice the time factor. But Sri Ramana saw that it was past the time they could go back to the town. He told Palani that Amma and Nayana would spend the night in Virupaksha cave and so the cave had to be cleaned and kept ready for them. When Bhagavan was staying in Skandashramam, Palani used to occupy Virupaksha cave. Now, He did not like at all Nayana and Amma, who were householders, to stay in the cave. But he could not say no to Sri Ramana. So he went away to the town without giving Nayana the key to the cave.

After it became quiet dark, Amma and Nayana started to go to the cave and Sri Ramana accompanied them. They came to the cave, but it was locked. For sometime they waited for Palani, but he did not come. Nayana understood Palani's aversion to Nayana's occupying the cave. Palani's view was that householders should not stay where Sanyasis stayed. Nayana felt sad at his foolishness which was the bane of India in general. Nayana prayed to the Mother about this foolish orthodoxy of his land –

अद्य क्रोधं विमोक्ष्यामि खाण्डवेऽग्निमिवार्जुनः।
भुवने प्राणिभिः पूर्णे परितोऽपि च विस्तृते ॥

'I am throwing this weapon of fire (anger) on this world full of beings and all around like the fire that Arjuna threw on the forest of Khandava'.

Nayana threw a stone (pebble) at the lock on the cave. The lock broke open with a sound. Amma opened the door and went into the cave. The pebble that Nayana threw went on making a hole in the mountain. Nayana saw this and sitting on a stone started to pray.

सलिलं क्षिपतश्चापि धुन्वतश्चापि पर्वतान्।
यथेन्द्रस्य तथेशस्य पुत्रस्य मम वैमहः ॥

'Let my effulgence be fruitful like the effulgence of Indra which rains water or breaks the mountains as I am the son of the Lord.'

Within fifteen munutes, Arunachala was covered with dark clouds and torrential rain flooded the mountain. People in Arunachala were very much surprised at this sudden change of weather. Suddenly a big sound of a thunderbolt was heard. Nayana opened his eyes and saw his guru in front of him radiating peace. Nayana heard these words, 'Nayana! Do not worry. The weapon that you have released will become the beacon light of Independence for India. It will be the inner strength of the protectors of Dharma and will be the starting point of human progress.' Nayana considered these words as the word of his guru.

दूरं याहि कुवाद धर्मवृष ते नेतः परं पंगुता
दुर्भ्रांते भुवनं जहीहि परितो वर्धस्व संसत्संतां।
सोदर्येण समन्वितो भुवमिमां प्राप्तो गुरुग्रामणीः
शूरान्तःपुरनेत्रविभ्रमहरो देवो भवानीसुतः ॥

O' Perverted Logic! Go far away. O' Bull of righteousness, you are not anymore lame. O' Illusion of the false! Banish yourself from the world. O' Wise men! May you prosper. Because the Lord Kumaraswamy who had destroyed the demon Sura has come down to the earth along with his brother. Nayana praised his guru Ramana thus and Ramana fed Nayana with curd-rice.

On the next day they heard that a thunderbolt destroyed the old chariot of the Arunachaleswara temple and Nayana thanked the Mother Uma, who gracefully averted the result of the destructive weapon that he threw at the world in anger.

Since Sri Ramana always appeared to him in the form of Kartikeya, Nayana depicted Ramana as a manifestation fo Kartikeya in many of his works. Once he asked Bhagavan whether it was proper for him to do so. Maharshi did not say anything. On the next day, Bhagavan showed to Nayana a verse in Venba metre and told him that Eswara Swamy wrote a Venba verse on Vinayaka and on his request Bhagavan also wrote one on Vinayaka. It was in Tamil language. In that verse Sri Ramana wrote that Ganapati was his brother and so, begged god Vinayaka to save him. Nayana read that verse and his eyes filled with tears at the love Bhagavan showed towards him. This Venba by Bhagavan was the proof of Bhagavan's silent acceptance of his being the manifestation of Kumara Swamy.

Chapter 7

ALAGAMMA'S DEMISE

'Alagu Sundarambol agamum Niyumur
trabhinnama yiruppom Arunachala'

- Aksharamanamala (Tamil)

'O' Arunachala! Like Alagu and Sundaram, let us be inseparable.'

Sakti and Siva are 'One', inseparable. Their body is a form of play. Sakti denotes the female and Siva denotes the male aspects. This is for general parlance. Sadhakas can perceive their unity. Ramana Maharshi composed a song on them, the Aksharamanamala. He describes the oneness of Siva and Sakti as the oneness of his own father and mother Sundaram and Alagamma. Their union was ideal as is evident in their being the parents of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Their names also denote the same meaning, beauty. Maharshi lost his father early in his life. But he had the good fortune of serving his mother till the end and redeemed the debt of a son to his parents.

Due to circumstances and old age, Alagamma came to Sri Ramana in 1916. At first she was doubtful whether the son, who was an ascetic without a house, would be considerate towards her. The disciples also might not agree to her living with Ramana. But when really the disciples objected, the ever-compassionate Maharshi said, 'Come, mother, we will go and live somewhere else', and led her lovingly to Virupaksha cave. In those days many people used to bring offerings to Ramana and they were enough to be distributed among them and so there was no need of any cooking. After the death of his wife, Ramana's brother, Nagasundaram also reached

Arunachala to stay at Bhagavan's feet. He took sanyas and became Niranjanananda. As Virupaksha cave was too small, all of them changed their residence to Skandashram. The mother then started cooking for all of them.

The equality concept of Bhagvan cannot be described in words. All creatures, animals, birds and humans were all equal in his vision. As Alagamma was used to traditional customs, she could not give up certain customs. She would be particular about purity of body and dress and would not eat certain food-stuffs like onions. She used to maintain the bondage of Ramana as her son. But she was by nature a simple woman. She was a devotee. She used to sing many devotional songs. They were all of philosophic intent. Some of them were on some item of food like 'Rasam' also.

Sri Ramana wanted his mother to go beyond the physical and mental bondage. For that purpose he started training her in various ways. 'Amma! Somebody touched your saree. Alas! There is nothing to eat except onions today. This vessel was touched by some one. What will you do?' Bhagavan used to tease her with such comments. Gradually Alagamma was made to understand the uselessness of these small orthodox customs. She had a great faith that Ramana was a divine soul. Ramana also gave her darshan of his divine forms now and then. Once he was seen by her as a great light and another time as god wearing serpents as jewels.

Alagamma gradually lost her 'vasanas'. She wore ochre robes and cooked for all people who came to see Sri Ramana.

In 1922, her health started to deteriorate gradually. Ramana himself was serving her. On 19-5-1922, she reached the end of her life. Medicine did not work

anymore with her. All knew that her end had come. It was the ninth day of the dark half of Vaisakha month. When Alagamma's breathing became shallow, Maharshi placed his right hand on her heart and left hand on the top of her head and sat by her looking at her with full attention. Here is Sri Ramana in his own words –

'The latent desires and the remnants of the previous birth's tendencies were rising up furiously. Consciousness of the external world subsided. So the subtle body started seeing in the subtle worlds scene after scene.' Maharshi was fighting with these tendencies with his soul force till they subsided completely in the heart at 8 P.M. and gave her Liberation. Nayana and Niranjanananda, among those who sat with her till the last, heard the last sound of death.

Thus mother Alagamma got Liberation through her son. When someone said casually, 'Amma has gone', Bhagavan corrected them saying, Amma has not gone, she has subsided. Now the question arose of how to dispose off the body. Cremation or samadhi? In Ramana Gita in the 12th Chapter, there is the answer for this question. 'To a lady who is Liberated after her death, only samadhi is prescribed, not cremation.' So Ganapati Muni suggested only samadhi should be performed. Everybody agreed and the body was buried under the shade of Aswatdha tree near Palithirtham.

On the Maha Puja day, Nayana composed 6 verses on the Mother, named, 'Soundaryamba Shatkam'

दुंदुभिवर्षे वृषषष्ठदिने माधवकृष्णदलीय नवम्यां।
भार्गववासरनिशि शततारा संयुक्तायां प्रथमे यामे ॥

In the year Dundubhi in the month of Vrishabha, on the sixth day, of the ninth day of the dark half of Vaisakha, on Friday night with the star Satabhisha in the sky, during the first three hours of the night,

भारद्वाजी पाराशर्य श्रेष्ठकुलोद्भवसुंदरपत्नी।
गुरुगुह भागजरमणमहर्षेर्माता पूता चारित्रेण॥

'Born in the gotra of Bharadwaja and wife of Sundara who was of the gotra of Parasara and mother of Sri Ramana Maharshi who was born as a manifestation of Sri Guruguha and a pure soul'.

त्याजितमानससङ्गा हंसी शिवपदभक्तिक्षालितापंका।
गुहकरशक्त्या रुद्धप्राणा तत्क्षण धूतसमस्त विकल्पा॥

'A Hamsi who has no attachment, she, who has washed away all her sins through devotion to Lord Siva's feet, having her life breath controlled by the power of the hand of Sri Guha and instantly having her Vikalpas got rid of',

निगमांतवतो वेदं ज्योतिः सर्वजगत्सु व्याप्तं ज्योतिः।
सुतगुहदृष्ट्या व्यक्तं ज्योतिः सौंदर्यांबा समभूज्ज्योतिः॥

That Saundaryamba has become the light, which is known by the declarations of Vedanta, which pervades all the worlds and which got enlightened by the son who was Kumara Swamy himself.'

रमणमहर्षेः करसरसिजद्वयमकरंदस्फुटधारेव।
अत्र समाधौ सौंदर्यांबादेव्यास्तीर्थं नवमघशमनम्॥

May the holy water of the samadhi of Saundaryamba became Remover of Sins (अघशमन) like the honey born out of the lotus hands of Sri Ramana Maharshi.

जयतु महर्षेर्माता पूता जयतु समाधिः कोऽपि तदीयः।
जघतु महर्षिस्थापितलिङ्गं जयतु च तीर्थं नवमघशमनं॥

'Glory be to the mother, pure, of Sri Ramana Maharshi!

Glory be to her samadhi!

Glory be to the lingam installed by the Maharshi

Glory be to the holy water of the new thirtham, Aghamarshana'.

Sri Ramana installed the lingam on Mother's samadhi while Nayana was chanting Vedamantras. Nayana's intention was that there should come up a Vedic university in that holy place, but Niranjananada wanted a temple to be built on the samadhi of the Mother. Niranjanananda tried to proceed with that intention, but it was not encouraging. Frustrated, he went to Bhagavan one day and told him, 'I want a temple to be constructed on Mother's samadhi, but my efforts do not seem to be fruitful.' Maharshi told him, 'Go and consult Nayana. Without his co-operation nothing will fructify.' Niranjananada accordingly consulted Nayana. Nayana was very much pleased with Bhagavan's comment on himself and told Niranjanananda, 'If Bhagavan says so, let it be'. As a result the temple of Matrubhuteswara rose up in all glory.

Maharshi strangely made Nayana's desire also fruitful. One day, Bhagavan came to visit the Samadhi and never went back. He said that some force had brought and kept him there. Afterwards, it became Ramanashramam. As the Vedic knowledge (Sri Ramana) itself resided there, naturally it became the world famous center of knowledge of all Vedas.

Chapter 8

KAPALA BHEDANAM

आत्मस्थस्य सहस्रारं शुद्धं ज्योतिर्मयं भवेत्।
तत्र जीवेन्न संकल्पो यदि सान्निध्यतः पतेत्।।

The Sahasrara of one who has realized the Self is pure light. Any intention which falls in it casually will not live because of the Knowledge of Self.

- Sri Ramana Gita.

The Sakti which is the cause of creation is Parameswari. This Sakti moves about in all creatures. The Sakti in the body is called Kundalini. It starts in the basic Chakra Muladhara, rises to the heart centre and reaches the head and pervades the whole being (body). This is the cause of all movements in all the creatures. It works as ignorance in those who think they are the bodies. In those Jnanis, who are devoid of any intention, it is pure Kundalini Sakti. It shines in the heart centre as 'I' and mingles with Sat and as a result the yogi becomes steady in the Atma. During tapas, Yogis get these darshanas. This is called Kundalini Vidya.

The truth of this Vidya can be seen in the Renuka-Jamadagni story. Obeying the order of the father, the son Parasurama cuts off the head of the mother Renuka. This action, when viewed casually surprises us and is considered very cruel. But the seekers of truth give an explanation considering this act as a part of Kundalini Vidya.

व्यापोह्य शीर्ष कपाले is a pronouncement in Taitthiriya Upanishad. When we study this anuvaka, we understand

that when the yogi raises the Kundalini Sakti to the head, it breaks open the cranium and along with the sakti outside the body, Kundalini moves in and out of the body. And, the state of this yogi is described like this –

"He himself gets independent sovereignty; he attains the Lord of the mind; he becomes ruler of the speech, the ruler of the eyes; the ruler of the ears; and the ruler of knowledge. Over and above all, he becomes Brahman, which is embodied in Akasa which is identified with the gross and subtle and has truth as its real nature, which reveals in life under whose possession the mind is a source of Bliss which is enriched and is immortal!'

Taking these words in good faith, with the hope that if the prana leaves the body through the head, they can attain Liberation, certain ascetics make their heads broken by a coconut at the time of their death. It has become a custom with some ascetics. If we look into history, we may find that certain yogis had attained Kapala Bhedana Siddi, but there is none who lived after that siddhi.

In the story of Parasurama, he cuts off the head of the mother which means that he had his mind broken in the head and the Sakti in him started going in and out of the body after mingling with the Sakti outside the body. At such a time, Nayana says, the yogi's body becomes a very powerful electric motor. Nayana had said this in Uma Sahasram :-

अवतरणं ध्यातं चेदारोहण मद्भुतं भवेच्छक्तेः ।
यस्मिन्निदं शरीरं भवति महावैद्युताग्नियन्त्रमिव ॥

'In him, who knows by experience the descent of Sakti from the sky through the head into the body, the Sakti rises from the Muladhara with terrific speed. When it rises surprisingly like this, this body becomes a veritable powerful electric motor'.

If we analyse this sloka, we come to understand that this 'Kapala Bedhana' process is itself being described as cutting off of Renuka's head. Actually the Mother Renuka's grace gave this siddhi of Kapala Bheda to her son Parasurama. Chit is Jnana in Bhagavan's words. The cutting off of ignorance itself is cutting off of the head. Probably this is the cause of Asiramma (no-head-mother) being worshipped by the people.

After Parasurama, Nayana is the only one in the modern times that got this Kapala Bedhana Siddhi. From the time of the darshan of Renuka in Padai Veedu, Nayana had this experience of to and fro rushing movement of Sakti in him as he described in certain slokas of Uma Sahasram. He described the existence of Jada and Atma Chaitanyas separately in him.

कापि मोदलहरी तव वीचिर्निर्गता दशशतारसुधाब्धेः ।
पूरयत्यखिलमम्ब शरीरं नेह वेद्मि परमे जडभागम् ॥

O' Mother Divine! Thy divine blissful wave rising from the milky ocean of Sahasrara is filling up my whole body with the sakti of the Self. I do not have consciousness of any dull part in my body.

सेयमुत्तमतमानि पतंती शीतलात् दशशतारपयोदात् ।
प्रेरितादखिल राज्ञि भव्यताबुद्धिसस्यमवतात् रसवृष्टिः ॥

'O' Queen of Everything! The glorious shower of rasa (sentiment) that I am experiencing now is directed by Thee and is flowing from the cloud of Sahasrara downwards. May this rain of rasa protect the crop of knowledge.'

This grand secret of yoga is impossible to come out of an inexperienced soul. Nayana had this great experience in Arunachala. He was residing in the mango-cave on Arunachala at that time along with his wife. Nayana was most of the time in meditation. The flow of

Sakti was gradually increasing and on 20-08-1922, it gave rise to Kapala Bhedana Siddhi. Nayana wrote a letter about this experience to his uncle Prakasa Sastri –

Great good News :

Kapala Moksham
Tiruvannamalai
Tuesday, 22-08-1922

O' Uncle!

Your letter to hand. Starting from 3 P.M. till night, Kundaliini Sakti rose up powerfully filling the Sahasrara which merged me in an ocean of Electric power. I did not know what to do. I was not sure that the body would withstand this sakti. I had not even the strength to speak. At 8 P.M. I was in the cave. The two parts of the cranium got loosened and because of the heat, got a little apart. It may be called broken also. This is Kapala Moksha. This is a sort of breaking a knot loose. I think this is the idea of Chchinna Masta. After that, this Sakti flowed like gas from the head to the outside for three minutes. Then I became alright. Now, the electric power (Sakti) is freely going out and coming in. A hand put on the head without touching feels the power like gas. That means the bodily electricity has mingled with nature's electricity.

Nayana.

While Nayana was having this experience, his family was with him. They saw a light coming out of the top of his head forming a round circle of light on the roof of the cave filling up the whole cave with glow. They were somewhat afraid and went to Skandashramam and told Bhagavan about the strange light. Bhagavan came and applied castor oil on Nayana's head and cooled it. The next day, Bhagavan got a pair of wooden sandals for Nayana and told him never to touch the ground without them. Nayana took the sandals from Bhagavan and told Bhagavan that he was receiving Paduka Diksha (initiation through Sandals) from Bhagavan.

तव च्छिन्नं शीर्षं विदुरखिलधात्र्यागमविदो
मनुष्याणां मस्ते बहुलतपसा यद्विदलिते ।
सुषुम्नायां नाड्यां तनुकरणसम्पर्करहिता
बहिश्शक्त्या युक्ता विगतचिरनिद्रा विलससि ॥ 7-27-21

O' Mother of the Universe! When with great strength born out of tapas, man (yogi)'s head is broken into two, a great Sakti rises in the central Nadi Sushumna detaching itself from the body and senses and joins the sakti in the cosmos. Thou art called the Kundalini Sakti which has awakened from sleep. Hence the tantrics who know the scriptures call you Sakti without a head (Chchinna masta).

Chapter 9

THE NECTARINE CLOUD INDRANI

रक्षितुं भरतविषयं शक्तमिन्द्रहृदयसखी ।
चंद्रबिंबरुचिरमुखी सा क्रियात् भुवि गणपतिम् ॥

'May the moon-faced consort of Indra make Ganapati able to save his mother land.'

- Indrani Saptasati

After the Kapala moksha siddhi, Ganapati had all the other siddhis in his possession. Many people used to come to visit Nayana. As the cave of the mango-tree was very small, a platform was constructed outside the cave and a thatched roof provided over it. As Nayana wanted to be near Bhagavan, he did not want to leave that cave. He lived there from 1917-1926. The family also stayed with Nayana. Mahadeva was accommodated in Appu Sastri's house for studies. He used to visit the parents during holidays. As the daughter Vajreswari was married, she used to visit the parents often. Mahadeva also got married in 1918.

After Kapala Moksha, Nayana's constitution changed somewhat. Mainly when any metal touched his body, it used to become yellow like gold. So, he stopped touching any metal. He had to wear wooden sandals always. He had to sit on a wooden table. His previous habit was to eat food in a metal plate and wash his hands in the plate. Now he changed the metal plate for a leaf-plate. One day, when he was sitting beside Bhagavan for meals, he washed his hand in the leaf due to habit. The water flowed under the leaves of other guests. Everyone was stunned as people should not eat in a plate when some

one else's food or water touched their plate. Bhagavan understood the predicament of the guests and said, 'It is Ganapati's prasad, eat', removing their embarrassment.

Sri B S Rama Rao, who was working in 'Chandamama Press' in Madras heard of Nayana's Siddhi of turning metal into gold. He wrote about his experience – 'I was studying Intermediate class. One day Nayana's lecture was arranged at a place in Madras. I knew that Nayana had Swarna-siddhi. I put a two-anna coin under the blanket that was spread for Nayana to sit on. Nayana came, sat on the blanket, shot up like one who had an electric shock and removed the blanket. He saw the two-anna coin and threw it away. I immediately took it up and saw that the coin has changed to yellow color. Till recently I kept the coin with me and showed it to many people'.

Whenever Nayana came out of the cave, a small drizzle would fall on him. He used to consider it as the grace of gods. Mother Indrani used to rain ambrosial grace on Nayana often. Indrani is the consort of Lord Indra. Nayana was a poet who did not seek any reward. She is moreover Vajravairochani (efflugent like a diamond). Nayana would never leave her. Nayana thought that the Sakti that was being showered on him was so great that if it was given to the residents of this earth, India would be resplendent with prosperity. There will be strength overflowing in the arms of freedom-fighters. Nayana prayed to the Mother – 'O! Mother! What can I offer you in return to the infinite grace you are showering on me? I will compose a garland of flowers with slokas to decorate you. Please accept them and as a sign show me your strength and beauty to these slokas of your praise and may they gladden the hearts of those who read them.'

Thus humbly offering his prayer he started to compose slokas on Indrani. Every day after he composed and read out the slokas there would be a small cloud in the sky and a ray of lightning would appear as if Mother has smiled. Nayana would exclaim, 'There! Mother has approved!'. Thus Nayana composed many slokas. Usually composition of this type would have the flavour of Bhakti. But Nayana's slokas contained also the present inglorious condition of the country, the causes and the remedy of it.

अगति मवीर्यादपगत धैर्यां।
अवतु शची मे जनिभुवमार्यां॥

'With no progress and virility, my country lost all courage. May Mother save my mother land!'

भिन्नां संघसहस्रै र्खिन्नां शत्रुभरेण।
पातुं भारतभूमिं मातर्देहि बलं नः॥

'O' Mother! Give us strength to save our mother land who is very much distressed due to oppression of her enemies and divided into thousands of cults'.

अध्वनो गलितचरणा मध्वरक्षिति मविभवां।
आददातु पथि विमले वैभवे च हरितरुणी॥

'Having slipped in her path and losing all glory stands this country of sacrifices. May Indrani restore her lost stability and glory!'

छिन्नां भिन्नां सुतरां सन्ना मन्नाभावा दभितः खिन्नां।
एतां पातुं भरतक्षोणीं जाये जिष्णोः कुरुमां शक्तं॥

O' Mother! Being mutilated and deteriorating and very much distressed due to lack of food is this land of Bharat. May you bestow strength on me to save this country!

There are causes analyzed and remedies suggested for this dire state of his country. Nayana wrote some slokas infusing strength into the leaders of the movement of Independence –

जगतां चक्रवर्तिन्यसितकटाक्षः जलदः
भक्तिभाजां शिखिनां नर्तनाय ।
सुकृती कोऽपि नाट्ये बहुले तत्र मातः
जगतीसारभूतानुपदेशान्करोति ॥

'O Queen of the worlds! Your look of black colour is becoming a black cloud for the peacocks (of devotees) to dance. In such various dances of yours, a holy man (Sri Ramana) is teaching the essence of knowledge. Please shower your grace on him.'

अपरो नव्यकाव्या न्यनवद्यानि धन्यः ।
विदधात्यप्रयत्ना द्बुधभोगक्षमाणि ॥

'Another blessed one (Ganapati Muni) is creating irreproachable new works of import for the enjoyment of the wise. Please give them your help.

इतरो भाग्यशाली रमणीयैः प्रसंगैः ।
वितनोति स्वजातिं जगति श्रेष्ठनीतिम् ॥

Another fortunate one is awakening his race with teachings in mellifluous speeches. Be merciful to them. (This suggests Colonel Alcott of Theosophical Society of Madras).

जगतां मातरेको महसा पुण्यशाली ।
विधुतारिं स्वदेशं कुरुते वीतपाशम् ॥

O' Mother of the worlds! Another holy man is redeeming his country from slavery of enemies (Gandhiji). Please bestow strength on him.

पर इंद्राणि साधुर्बत विस्मृतविश्वः ।
रमते सिक्तगंडः प्रमदाश्रुप्रतानैः ॥

O' Indrani! Another ascetic (Aurobindo) is playing with tears of joy forgetting the world. Please protect him.

Thus he composed 700 slokas and compiled them into 'Indrani Saptasati'. There are groups of a hundred slokas. In every hundred slokas, there are four groups of 25 slokas each. In every 25 slokas, the second and twenty fourth slokas are of patriotic nature. The slokas of the 1st hundred have 12 letters to each line and the second hundred have 14 and thus go on in arithmetical progression and end up with 24 letters in the last hundred slokas. Another 600 slokas were added to 'Uma Sahasram' to complete it.

Chapter 10

THE CALL OF POLITICS

न मम परमे मुक्तावाशा न वा विभवाष्टके
न च गजघटापूर्णायां वा महेश्वरि सम्पदि।
न च मधुमुचां वाचां सर्गे निरर्गलवैभवे
मुनिभुवि कुतो जातः सोऽहं तदेव समीर्यताम्॥ 9-34-19

'O' Mother! I have no desire for Liberation. Neither have I any desire for the eight prosperities. The sweet poetic flow that issues out of me also does not satisfy me. Mine is only one question; for what purpose am I born in this world? Please inform me of this purpose and get things, done by me'.

In the political field of those days, the main social issues were untouchability and freedom of woman. For a scriptural solution for these problems the National leaders called scholars, religious pontiffs and sadhus to give their considered opinion. Because of the faith people had in their religious customs, these things became a big problem. Mud slinging was also practiced on the caste system and other customs. There were endless arguments produced by both sides for and against these customs and so the solution was quite elusive. Reformists and orthodox parties tried their best to oppose each other's opinions. These clouds of politics darkened Arunachala sky also.

In 1916, the late Sri Bayya Narasimham presided over the state congress committee of Madras. Again in 1923, a committee held a conference and invited Nayana to speak. He attended both the conferences. Nayana spoke of the freedom that women enjoyed in vedic times.

As a result of this speech, he became a member of the Congress party. In 1924, the All India Congress committee met in Tiruvannamalai. Mahatma Gandhi, Malaviya, Annie Bessant and other leaders attended the meeting. Nayana gave the inaugural speech and many leaders were influenced by Nayana. In December of the same year, there was a conference in Belgaum under Gandhiji's leadership. Gandhiji proposed that Hindi should become the National language. Nayana opposed the idea. He argued that the Hindu culture is based on Sanskrit and the culture can prosper only when Sanskrit is sponsored. Otherwise, he said, the country would degenerate. Gandhiji opined that Sanskrit was limited to only one section of the population and so will not be acceptable to all. Immediately, Nayana countered saying that Sanskrit was the oldest language which was used in all sections of the Indian Society. In the end, Nayana's argument was overridden. But this meeting helped Nayana to create 'Laali Bhasha' (Easy Sanskrit).

Nayana did not speak against the caste system of the Hindus. The caste is not the outcome of birth, avocation or status of a person. It is decided by the quality of a person. When Satwa is more, Rajas is less and tamas is nominal in a man, he is considered a Brahmin. Brahmins are always steady in the thought of God and are able to lead the society in spirituality. The power of Kshatriyas (Caste) can be seen in the leaders. They possess valour, rebellious temperament and egotism to a greater of smaller degree. They have Rajo guna more and Satwa and Tamo guna less. Those who have more of Tamo guna and less of Rajo guna and Satwa guna are called 'Vaisyas'. Those who have more or completely Tamo guna are called Sudras. In Hinduism, there are no actual barriers to consider these castes separate from one another. The society gives respect to them as per their mental

development and behaviour. This used to be Vedic culture. Nayana used to be bound to only this culture.

In 1927, the National Congress held many meetings in Hyderabad, Machilipatnam and other places to sort out the problem of untouchability. Nayana participated in those meetings. On 25-02-1927, there was a meeting held in Sri Madapati Hanumantharao's house. The conversations held at that meeting were like this – questioners were various and Nayana gave the answers.

Q – What are the common values of Hindus?

A – Faith in Vedas. To give equal rights to all. Unless these two are guaranteed, people will not have proper faith. The Hindus must accept the Vedas just as Christians accept the Bible.

Q – This is an ideal. All are called Hindus. Who are Hindus actually?

A – Those who believe the system of the four castes are Hindus. Even an agnostic is a Hindu if he accepts the standard of Vedas. Eg. The Sankhyas do not believe in God. But they accept the Vedas and hence are Hindus.

Q – How should Vedas be propagated?

A – The important portions of Vedas should be translated into national languages.

Q – Are the Buddhists Hindus?

A – No. Buddhists, Jains and Brahma Samajists do not accept the Vedas and hence they are not Hindus. Arya Samajists are Hindus.

Q – Must caste differences exist?

A – Everyone should become a Brahmin. Till then, the inner differences inside the castes must be removed. There should not be any degree of merit inside a caste. The unity of customs alone brings about brahminhood. Customs started by

those who have realized god have to be accepted as authoritative. Equality means that the customs like upanayana have to be common to all. Inequality in other things like customs, have to be removed. Because there is a difference between a vegetarian and non-vegetarian, inequalities cannot be removed in the food habits.

Q – Can others be admitted into Hindu religion? What would be the caste of such people?

A – If one has been converted to another religion from Hindu religion, they can be converted back to Hinduism. They will be of the same caste from which they had been converted. Such people can be called, 'Aviseshas'.

Q – Are castes good?

A – If there is discrimination, it is certainly bad.

Q – Can Smirtis be written afresh now?

A – They can be.

Q – How can they be excercised?

A – There must be a Council of Pundits. They have to ordain the rules.

Q – How should untouchables be treated?

A – They can be treated as Sudras.

Q – What is the use of social reformation?

A – The social reformers might teach freedom. But they cannot bring about right attitudes. They are trying to remove the defects in the society – like the defects in marriage.

Q – Can the 4 Ashram idea be revived?

A – They must be in accord with the present conditions. In Gurukula methods the present hostel type of accommodation can be arranged. Women also may have Gurukulas. Women also

can be invested with the sacred thread (Upanayana). In Rig Vedic times, women used to have the ceremony of Mounji Bandhan (tying a cord around the girdle). Women must have Upanayanam done before puberty. Women can also be Vana-prasthas.

Q – How to solve the problem of Brahmins and non-Brahmins?

A – By giving the right to study Vedas to all.

Q – In certain Smritis, Sudras are barred from the right to Vedas. How do you harmonise them?

A – They are temporary injunctions. When such things are written on the basis of jealousy, they are not to be taken as standard. Smritis which go against Vedas need not be taken as standards. The Sutras which are written denying rights on Vedas are hatred oriented. They are against Vedic pronouncements and so need not be taken as standard.

Q – What is the difference between Sudras and the untouchables?

A – Very little. The eating plates are kept separate.

Q – Are the panchamas degenerated Aryans?

A – No, they were aboriginal tribes. Not degenerated Aryans.

Q – Is inter-dining permitted between the Aryans and Panchamas?

A – There is no scriptural objection. There is only a custom of objection to inter-dining. This custom is very strict in the Southerners. Because they were tantrics, there is a lot of protection from evil sights. In the scriptures, Inter-dining is permitted in the first three castes. Sudras are not to be fed in the same line as the other three castes.

Q – Who are Mlechchas?

A – He who speaks unspeakable things is a Mlechcha, but none else.

Q – Are marriages after puberty prescribed by Sastras?

A – Yes. But the maid who is married after puberty is not impure. There is a purificatory ceremony prescribed for such a woman. Child marriages are not bad. But consummation must be performed only later.

Q – Can women be celebates?

A – Yes.

Q – Why should not marriages be performed in the Western method?

A – The customs are different to different countries. Those in our country who got married in the Gandharva method went mostly into the Purda system. In our country and countries like Arabia, due to the hot climate, emotions rise up quickly. It is not like that in cold countries like England. Customs of one country do not suit other countries.

Q – What is the goal of Hindus?

A – The goal is that everybody should study Vedas and wear the sacred thread.

Q – What is your opinion about 'Age Consent'?

A – I am neutral in that controversy.

Q – Is unity of all religions possible?

A – It is not possible. But if the social customs are deleted from Hinduism, the Vedic religion alone can bring about unity in the world.

Q – May women remarry?

A – They may. There is scriptural sanction for that. There are instances quoted in the Puranas and Yayati's story also is an example fo it.

Q – How to preach devotion and idol worship to lay people?

A – The radiance in the sun, fire on the earth, and Rudra in the sky have to be worshipped. The worship of the sun is good to both the scholar and the layman.

On that evening at 5 P.M. more than two hundred Hindus sat Nayana in a palanquin, took him in a procession and gave him the title of 'Muni". The 'Andhra Samvardhini Grandhalaya' Secunderabad also felicitated Nayana.

Nayana had to face much antagonistic criticism in this venture. Some followed him and some rejected him. But nobody had the courage to face him and argue.

Lastly, Nayana wrote some books like, 'The Constitution', 'Panchama Mimamsa' and 'Panchajana Charcha' and retired from politics.

Chapter 11

A GRAND PERSONALITY

परिपाकेन काले स्युः सिद्धयस्तान् तपस्यतः ।
प्रारब्धं यदि ताभिस्स्यात् विहारो ज्ञानिनोऽपि च ॥

- Sri Ramana Gita

Many people used to ask Sri Ramana about siddhis. His answers used to be like this –

Devotee – For spiritual progress, are not siddhis like the disappearance of the body necessary?

Maharshi – What do you mean by that? Are you the body?

Devotee – No. But in spiritual progress bodily changes occur. Do not they?

Maharshi – What sort of changes are you expecting? What for?

Devotee – Is not disappearance of body a sign of progress?

Maharshi – So, then, those who speak and write and are visible are ignorant in your opinion?

Devotee – Not like that. The Maharshis like Vasishta and Valmiki had such powers, I think.

Maharshi – That was their Prarabdha. Due to prarabdha, they must have acquired siddhis and also Jnana. Why are you craving for such siddhis which are obstacles to Jnana? Does a Jnani think that his gross body is an obstacle?

Siddhi means achievement. It is not proper to associate it with the mystic powers. Nayana who possessed those siddhis after Kapala Moksha was averse to exhibit them. But the world would not leave such people alone.

Nayana attended the political meeting held at Vijayawada in December 1925. He spoke on the existing social evils and methods to remedy them. The orthodox people resented Nayana's modern attitude. But, the youth used to be inspired by his speeches. A student called Cheruvu Ramakrishnayya was one such youth. One day he invited Nayana to their house for food. The father of the youth was quite an orthodox person. He used to perform offerings to the fire daily. He knew that Nayana did not observe orthodox customs and so he asked his son to make Nayana sit in the backyard of the house till the offerings to the Fire were over. The son was embarrassed, but Nayana told him not to worry and obey the father as he was master of the house. Nayana asked for a newspaper and sat on a chair provided and started reading the papers.

During the worship of fire the custom is for the wife to bring hot coals to start the fire worship. Ramakrishna's mother went into the backyard, made coals hot and bringing them with a pan looked at Nayana. To her great surprise, Nayana appeared to her like god. Ganapati with the regular force of an elephant sitting on the chair. She ran into the house and told her husband, 'What are we doing here? While god Ganapati is sitting in the backyard, we are worshipping him in the house. 'O' come and see!'. She brought her husband and showed him Nayana who was looking like Ganapati. The old man also was very much surprised and apologized for his behaviour and brought Nayana into the house. Nayana himself chanted the mantras and finished the ceremony.

The devotees who came to see Bhagavan used to visit Nayana regularly. Once a devotee went to Bhagavan and asked him to permit him to put paste marks of Vaishnavas on Bhagavan's forehead as he wished to see Bhagavan as a Vaishnava saint. Bhagavan laughed and told him to go and paint Nayana who was in the mango-cave. There was a mystic meaning in this suggestion. Ganapati was a manifestation of god Vishnu and it was proper to decorate Nayana with the emblem of the Vaishnavas. The devotee went to mango-cave and saw that Nayana was in deep meditation. The devotee very silently decorated Nayana and had his desire fulfilled without Nayana being conscious of the fact. When Nayana and Bhagavan were having lunch together, Bhagavan laughed and asked, 'Nayana! What is that on your face?' A devotee brought a mirror and showed the marks of Vaishavism on Nayana's face. Nayana laughed and looking at Bhagavan found that Bhagavan was wearing the Saiva vibhuti marks on his face. So he said, 'What is on your face is the same as that which is here!' and everybody enjoyed the joke.

Mahadeva was married and the bride was brought home. Nayana arranged for a house for rent in the town and the family was shifted there.

Nayana started to write a novel in Sanskrit depicting the existing social life. He wanted to make it a historical novel with a bias on the freedom and rights of women in political and family life. Nayana had a plan in his mind to write the novel both in Sanskrit and Telugu languages. The novel was named 'Poorna' with about 200 chapters and was situated in the period of Andhra Maha Vishnu, the founder of Andhra Desa. The characters and story were all planned systematically. But not on paper. As Bhagavan said, everything was planned in his brain, not on paper. Nayana used to narrate part of the story he

planned to the disciples who used to gather round him in the evening. The venue of the narration was Arunachala Temple.

In 1926, Nayana's daughter Vajreswari was brought for delivery to the parent's house. She completed 7 months of pregnancy. One day she had a stomach-ache and also diarrhea. She was unable to bear the strain. A native doctor was called. He gave medicine and asked a particular type of plantain fruit to be given to her. Unfortunately that particular fruit was not available in that season. Nayana could do nothing and sat along with his son in the temple and started narration of the story. A fruit vendor approached them with the particular plantains in his baskets and asked, 'Are you Ganapati Sastri? I was asked to give you these plantains.' He gave a few plantains to Nayana and disappeared into the temple. Nayana immediately told Maha Deva to run after and find who he was, but the man was too quick for Mahadeva. Nayana said, 'He is none other than Aruanchala' and bowed to Lord Siva.

Chapter 12

DEMISE OF VISALAKSHI AMMA

स्वरूपे वर्तमानानां पक्कानां योषितामपि।
निवृत्तत्वा न्निषेधस्य हंसीत्वं नैव दुष्यति ॥

'Even women if they are ripe and steady in the Self can be Hamsinis because there is no objection'.

- Sri Ramana Gita

Bhagavan was staying in the Virupaksha cave in those days. Once there was a reference to 'Sankara Vijayam' of Sri Vidyaranya Swamy. Bhagavan said, 'Because Sri Vidyaranya was a worshipper of Sri Vidya, he wanted to build a town in the shape of Sri Charka.' Immediately, Nayana said that in 'Arunashtakam' of Sankara, there was a reference to Arunachala as 'Sri Chakrakriti Sonasailavapusham Sri Shodasaratmakam'. Also, in the Arunachalapuranam, it is said that this hill is in the shape of Sri Chakra. Hence we got a place, unasked for, in the shape of Sri Chakra. Bhagavan is the Emperor. If ten houses are built around the hill, it will become a great Kingdom. Vidyaranya must have meant only this. Here is the Army Chief, and here is the exchequer'. Saying like this Nayana arranged everything in a trice. We see what a place Sri Chakra has in spiritual matters!'

Visalakshi Amma was a great soul who worshipped Sri Chakra regularly. Visalakshi and Ganapati Muni were a holy couple like Vasishta and Arundhati. Like the great poet Jayadeva and his wife, Nayana and Visalakshi were an ideal couple. If a couple are dedicated to each other, Grihastashrama would become the best ashrama. Even a

tapaswi like Nayana became despondent when Visalakshi once went to attend to her children's needs and said, 'Without you, my tapas has become a cry in the wilderness.' The love of a dedicated couple is divine. The atmosphere of a rishi's ashram would remind us of such a love.

In 1922, Bhagavan came down from Skandasramam and settled down at his mother's samadhi. Consequently a hut was constructed for the convenience of the devotees. Gradually that place turned out to be the present Ramanashramam. Visalakshi Amma seems to have requested Bhagavan to get a temple with Sri Chakra be constructed in the ashram. Bhagavan valued her word and took great care to get Sri Chakra installed during the construction of the temple over Mother's samadhi. Most probably this was the Sri Chakra puram of Nayana's description.

Usually every woman desires for worldly prosperity like a house, a good husband, children and money and the like. She would not like to live in caves and forests. But, contrary to this, Visalakshi Amma desired to be with her husband in caves. She did tapas along with Nayana.

As soon as she set foot in Arunachala, Bhagavan said, 'Amma has come.' From that day she was Amma to everybody. Nayana's disciples were considered as her children. She used to cook food for all of them. One day she cooked a type of balls of rice called Modakas on a Vinayaka festival. Usually a very big ball in the shape of Ganapati will be prepared and set aside to be given to the washerman. The usual idea is that one who eats it does not study well. Visalakshi served that Modaka to Nayana on that day. A disciple objected to this. Then Amma said, 'O! Let him eat it. We have already too much of learning here!' All present laughed at the joke.

She wanted women not to be frogs in a well. They should have the right to perform tapas along with men. They could also live a Hamsini life. She made Nayana ask Ramana two questions about woman –

1. Is there scriptural sanction for women, who are steady in the Self, to leave the house and be Hamsinis?
2. If a realized woman leaves the body, is the body to be buried or burnt?

Bhagavan gave replies to these pertinent questions –

1. If women are ripe and steady in the Atma, they can live as Hamsinis as there is no objection to it.
2. Jnana and Mukti are the same to both men and women. Hence a liberated woman's body should not be burnt. Her body is a temple. There are as many demerits for the body of a liberated woman to be burned as that of a man.

At the time of Nayana's Kapala Moksha, Amma had progressed quite a lot in achieving Kundalini Vidya. Nayana made it known in his letter to his son.

'She, Visalakshi, has become Yogeswari as her name signifies. She is doing 12,000 of japa of Prachanda Chandi Ekakshari and intense dhyana daily. The meditation is not born of effort. It is born out of grace. She is able to remain any length of time with half-closed eyes. That state started yesterday (14-1-1922). She tells that her body becomes electrified at such times. There is great radiance in her divine face visible to everybody. You please serve with letters your mother who has attained new stability in yoga'.

From 1926 Visalakshi's condition started to deteriorate. The body started getting wasted due to anemia and indigestion. But her tapas got more and more

strong. Her radiance attracted people. With the help of her husband' and Maharshi's grace, she became steady in the Self and got Liberation on 26-7-26 in Arunachala. That day according to the Indian Calendar was Monday, the second half of the month of Ashadha.

Nayana eulogized her as, 'The moonlight of the clan of Atreyas, the daughter-in-law of Vasishtas, mother of Mahadeva who was a Brahmavetta (a realized soul), a great one among the Pativratas (devoted wives), who is a lover of service to the world, adept in Panchadasi Vidya, the first guru of Tarini Vidya in the south of Vindhya mountain and a friend in tapas, Visalakshi has become Visalakshi Mata!'

Chapter 13

PROPOGATION OF SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI'S TEACHING

नवकुंकुमरेणुपंकिलस्य स्मरणान्ते सततं स्तनाचलस्य ।
स्वयमप्यचलो बभूव शोण श्शशिधारी जगतां सवित्रि शंके ॥

'O' Mother Savitri! Thinking constantly of the nipples of your breasts applied with red Kumkum paste, Siva has become the red-hill (Arunachala)'

Hearing this sloka, all the people sitting around laughed heartily. Ramana himself laughed and said, 'Even Arunachala has to emote at hearing Nayana's poetry!'

Nayana laughed and said, 'I will not tarnish His qualitylessness, do not worry.' Again, Nayana composed some more slokas –

कमलासनकंजलोचनादीन् अवमत्यत्रिदशान्नगेशकन्ये ।
अगुणे रमसे नगेऽत्र शोणे क्व गुणान्पश्यति जातिपक्षपातः ॥

He wittily held forth Parvati's favouritism towards her own species (daughter of a hill marries a hill) in selecting the qualityless Arunachala mountain as her spouse rejecting all the other gods.

कुसुमादपि कोमलं वपुस्ते हृदयेशस्त्वरुणोगिरिः कठोरः ।
प्रचलाऽखुतुरंगमस्य मातः समनुध्यायबिभेमि चेतसेदम् ॥

'O' Mother! Your body is softer than a flower. The body of your husband is very hard (being a hill). Your son's vehicle is a rat which is very fickle. O' Mother of such a son! I am terrified of all these troubles of yours'.

Nayana used to regale daily the devotees of Ramana like this with his poetry. In such a beautiful atmosphere the lack of Alagamma's and Visalakshi Amma's presence was keenly felt by the devotees of Ramana. After his wife's demise, Nayana started propagation of Sri Ramana's teaching in right earnest. As Nayana stayed in Karnataka area for some time, many Karnataka people became devotees of Ramana. Nayana spoke about Ramana in many places in Tamil Nadu also.

Nayana started writing 'Viswa Mimamsa' in the beginning.

रमणस्य गुरोः प्राप्य कटाक्षं ज्योति रद्भुतं ।
कुर्मो विश्वस्य मीमांसां यथाबुद्धं यथा श्रुतं ॥

'Getting the wonderful light of guru Ramana's graceful look and as per our knowledge and what was heard through elders, this treatise on the analysis of the universe is being written'.

Adi Sankara taught Atmabodha taking man as the center of analysis in 'Saririka Mimamsa'. Nayana took the universe as the center of analysis. This can be said to be based on the Vedic mantra, 'Viswamevedam Purushah'. In this book in which Sri Ramana's teaching is described, some points were included from Sat-darsanam and Ramana Gita also. This is an independent venture. At first 37 slokas were written and then expanded to 394 slokas. Students of Tattwa Sastra ought definitely to go through this book.

Nayana was thus immersed in writing. One day Nayana received an invitation from the Secunderabad Sri Krishnadevaraya Andhra Bhasha Nilayam to speak in the Silver Jubilee Celebrations to be held on the dates 16,17, 18 in February 1927. They requested Nayana to come a month earlier. Nayana accepted the invitation and wanted

to go there a month before the date of the Jubilee celebration, but he was laid up with urinary trouble before the Pongal festival. One day a sadhu came to Nayana's house and asked for Nayana and told his son-in-law who was sitting on the outer pial of the house that he came from Kanyakumari to see Nayana. The son-in-law told him to wait and went in to inform Nayana. Nayana came out, but the sadhu was not there anymore. Even a search in the nearby lanes proved futile. 'It must be Arunachala who muArunachala who must have come toe malady', thought Nayana. Very soon his trouble subsided and he started for Secunderabad after the festival was over.

As soon as the news of Nayana's presence spread in Secunderabad, many elders came to see him. Some were given mantra-diksha. Nayana's talks were arranged in many places in the town.

'Mahatmas are born often. Every decade we find a Mahatma appear. But it is very rare for Maharshis to be born. To our great good fortune, Sri Ramana Maharshi is now in our midst. Have his darshan. It is liberating', Nayana preached and many Andhras ran to Maharshi.

On February 16, 17, 18, the Silver Jubliee was grandly celebrated and thousands had the benefit of hearing Nayana. 'Like the Hatha, Raja and Bhakti yogas, study also is a yoga. This is called Swadhyaya yoga. Just as action (karma) without yoga is unfruitful, a study without yoga is also not fruitful. It does not give one a proper perspective. Karma performed without expectation of its fruit is yoga and in the same way, Swadhyaya, with proper analysis is yoga. Everybody who studies a book must have this in mind while he studies.'

This essence of Nayana's speech was published in the Silver Jubliee Souvenir released in 1928. This was an awakener for the youth of the day.

In Bolaram and Gadwal also Nayana's lectures were arranged. The Dravida Sammelan under the supervision of Sri T Virabhadhrayya seated Nayana in a palanquin and took him in procession to the venue.

After the meetings were all over, Nayana went home to Kaluva Rai. From there he went to Sunki on the invitation of some scholars. Sunki was a village situated at a distance of 9 Kilometers from Parvatipuram on the river Nagavali in a setting of orchards. It was Mahadeva's father-in-law's place. It is a place sanctified with constant chanting of Vedas and tapas and sacrifices. Even now the Nagavali waters ring with the chanting of Vedas. A holy man called Sri Viswanatha Rama Somayajulu is revered by all the residents of the surrounding villages. He was a celibate and well read in the Vedas, an embodiment of hospitality and a great social worker. He had a younger brother who worked as his right hand. Rajeswari was his youngest sister who was wedded to Mahadeva. As Somayajulu was fond of social work he wanted to make a proper code of conduct for all in both the auspicious and inauspicious functions, both Vedic and social. The famous Sri Tata Subbaraya Sastry, Sri Peri Kasinatha Sastri and Adibhattla Narayana Das attended the meeting. As Ganapati Muni was younger than all of them, he used to sit in the audience and watch the proceedings. For three days many social and scriptural matters were discussed. On the last day of the function, Kasinatha Sastry noticed Nayana writing silently something. He came near and saw what Nayana was at. Nayana was codifying all the proceedings of the function of three days in a form of aphorisms. He embraced Nayana and said, 'Ganapati, you are a real Ganapati. You have brought in to a shape all the proceedings of the meetings. Very nice work done.'

Nayana stayed in Sunki for some more time and wrote some treatises like Dharmanusasanam and Devata Siddhanta Taravali. He gave mantra diksha to Somayajulu and some others. All the members became fond of Nayana and served him with great devotion.

Chapter 14

THE DIVINE PLAY

केचिद्योगविदां पुरस्सर इति प्रज्ञानि बुद्ध्या परे
साधुः कश्चिदितीतरे गुरुधिया केप्यङ्घ्रिपद्मं तव।
सेवंते रमणाभिधान मनुजक्षेमाय जातिःक्षितः
द्वित्रास्तां गिरिजांक पीठनिलयं जानंति देवं गुहं ॥

O' Ramana! Some consider you as a great yogi, some a great Jnani, some a sadhu and some others their guru. Only two or three people know you as an embodiment of Kumara Swamy who always sits on the lap of Mother Uma.

- Chatwarimsat

Only when one has risen above the body idea can he know the correct meaning of the word guru. For that there must be total surrender. When you surrender totally to the guru, you will understand that guru is Eswara, is Atma (ईश्वरो गुरुरात्मेति).

Almost all gurus teach us that they are not the bodies and neither are we. We are all Atma. Sri Ramana used to consider the body as inert matter. He used to dissuade worship to his body. He liberated and is till liberating umpteen people in his divine mercy. Nayana describes him as not a human form, but a divine being who has taken the form of a human being. Nayana used to tell devotees not to close their eyes when they sat in front of Bhagavan as they could quite well see with physical sight the Lord Himself.

The devotees in those times used to feel it a great good fortune to be able to visit Maharshi when Nayana

was with him. It looked as though Siva has come down from the Himalayas to hold a court at Arunagiri. Arunagiri shone as Vijnanagiri with Ramana and devotees. As the saying goes, there is always ignorance along with knowledge. The Maya of Eswara is insurmountable. The number of devotees in the Ashram grew and grew in numbers. Naturally, love and hatred started their play in the Ashram. Some unhappy incidents started happening in the Ashram. The post of Supreme authority of the Ashram became the point of contention. Some Institution like Ramanananda Nilayam was formed in the town. A division of adherence of some calling themselves as Ramana's devotees and some as Nayana's devotees started developing. As a result, people like Kapali Sastri and Dorai Swamy who came to Ramana through Nayana left for Pondicherry. But they used to visit Ramanashramam often. Even Nayana had to face some unhappy situations, but nothing could daunt his devotion to his guru. Bhagavan used to say about their unhealthy behaviour of the Ashramites, 'They come at first for Bhagavan's darshan, and then start to pick out the faults in the management of the ashram and forget the purpose of coming to Ashram.'

Sri Aurobindo wrote a poem called the Mother. It is a book which reveals the Sakti aspect of God. Aurobindo had the opportunity of going through 'Uma Sahasram' of Nayana through Nayana's disciples who went to Aurobindo Ashram to stay for good. He gave a fitting comment on the book, 'This is a wonderful work. The author is a super human being. His divine voice rings out in every sloka of the work! I would like to see him.'

Nayana went to Kaluva Rai from Sunki to perform Visalakshi Amma's anniversary. He started to write 'Indra Sahasra nama' (thousand names of Indra). He culled these names from Rig Veda. This was written in the method of

Lalitha Sahasram and Vishnu Sahasram. He completed the work in Arunachala in 1927 and showed it to Bhagavan. Bhagavan felt interested when he saw certain names of Indra like Achakraya, Swadhaya, Vartamanah, Anilah, Suparnah and Kiejah. This can be used in daily worship. Phala Sruti was also given.

Muruganar was one of the foremost devotees of Bhagavan. He was a great poet in Tamil language. He composed a poem describing Siva's 'Lila'. A scene was to be described about Siva giving out Knowledge of the Truth to rishis who were performing a sacrifice in Darukavanam. Muruganar thought that it would be proper and nice if Bhagavan himself wrote the poem pertaining to that scene. Sri Ramana accepted Muruganar's request and composed the poem in Tamil which goes as 'Upadesa Saram'. Bhagavan asked Nayana to write a commentary on it. Nayana took the book with all humility and devotion from Bhagavan's hand and in a voice choked with tears said to the people around, 'We all think we are great Pundits. Can we write one such sloka?' Nayana promptly wrote the commentary as requested by Bhagavan.

Sudhanva (Dorai Swamy) came from Aurobindo's Ashram to request Nayana to come to Pondicherry at the invitation of Sri Aurobindo. As soon as he heard of the invitation of Aurobindo, Nayana had a vision of Aurobindo.

परं इंद्राणि साधुर्बत विस्मृत्य विश्वं ।
रमते सिक्तगंडः प्रमदाश्रुप्रतानैः ॥

'Oh! Forgetting the world and silent in yoga, Sri Aurobindo is enjoying bliss with tears flowing down his cheeks.'

Nayana met Sri Aurobindo and Sri Mata when they were sitting alone. For ten minutes all of them sat in silence. Then Aurobindo turned to Sudhanva and asked, 'Is Nayana a worshipper of Ganapati?' Sudhanva told Aurobindo that Nayana was Ganapati's manifestation. Aurobindo told him that he saw god Ganapati on the forehead of Nayana.

Next evening Sri Mata sent for Nayana. They were alone for 44 minutes meditating together. Sri Mata sat with closed eyes and Nayana sat with eyes open. Afterwards the Mother told Kapali Sastri, 'The moment we started meditating, my mind went deep into great depth. I never reached this state in meditating with anyone else.'

The disciples of Nayana hoped that Nayana would stay back in Aravinda Ashraram for good. Kapali Sastri was translating Aurobindo's 'Janani' into Sanskrit. He requested Nayana to write the foreword to the translation. Nayana started writing with the first invocatory sloka –

वंदे श्री रमणर्षे राचार्यस्य पदाब्जं।
यो मेऽदर्शयदीशं भांतं ध्वांतमतीत्य॥

'I bow to the feet of Sri Ramana Maharshi who showed me Eswara who is shining beyond darkness.'

Everybody understood that surrender to a guru occurs only once in a life time and the power in the disciple is the power of the guru. With this understanding the disciple lost all hope of keeping Nayana in Aravind Ashram.

One week went by. Nayana was still in Aravind Ashram. Nayana's disciples who were at Ramanashram got worried with the thought that as the conditions were not too good at Ramanashram at that time, Nayana might choose to stay back in Aravind Ashram for good. At last

they voiced before Sri Ramana himself their worry. Bhagavan said enigmatically, 'Oh! Where will he go? Where is the place to go? He will certainly come back'. As Bhagavan predicted Nayana came back after a week's stay at Aravinda Ashram.

'They all felt your presence as soon as they saw me,' said Nayana to Bhagavan. Bhagavan smiled a broad smile at this. 'Even if bodies are different, the Sakti is the same in all gurus', used to say Bhagavan often.

Nayana wrote many slokas on guru at various times. Bhagavan carefully collected them all and kept them in one place. They were 40 in number. The collection was called Sri Ramana Chatwarimsat. They are being chanted daily before Bhagavan. Subsequently they were printed in a book form. After some time, a disciple called Natesan went to Aravind Ashram. They showed Natesan the sloka, 'Vande Sri Ramanarsher .....'. He brought and showed it to Bhagavan. Bhagavan liked it and asked it to be made the invocatory sloka to Chatwarimsaat. Even now this sloka is the first invocatory sloka with which Ramanshram activities are begun daily.

In 1929 summer was very hot. Nayana could not bear the heat. It was impossible to stay in the mango-cave. Muruganar understood his condition and invited him to the Jack fruit orchard in which he himself was staying. Nayana who wrote the commentary to 'Upadesa Saram', wrote Manisha Sangrahah as an adjunct to it. Writing aphorisms is a difficult job. The matter should be very concise, but thorough. Nayana was the unique scholar who started writing aphorisms in the method of rishis of yore. Nayana defined Atma, Time, the World and Nature in these aphorisms. He also gave out the Vidyas that were the essence of analysis of rishis.

Nayana's health started deteriorating further due to the heat. Ashramites saw this condition of Nayana and

wrote about it to Daivarata who was in Gokarna. Daivarata was going to the banks of river Bhadra for tapas. So, he sent two of his disciples to bring Nayana and settle him in 'Sirasi' which was a summer resort. Daivarata formally invited Nayana through a letter and sent his regards. Bhagavan also agreed to the proposal and permitted Nayana to go to Sirasi.

Though very much unwilling, Nayana got ready to leave Tiruvannamalai. He visited the Mother in the temple and prayed to her –

शोणनगार्धतनोऽनिशमङ्के धारयसेऽयि गृहं रमणाख्यम्।
आगतमप्ययि हा मुहुरम्बोच्चाटयसे गणपं ननु कस्मात्॥

'O! Mother, who are half the body of Arunachala! You are fondling Ramana in your lap all the time. Even though I have come to you, you are driving me away now. Why?'

Thus with a sad heart Nayana took farewell of Arunachala.

Chapter 15

NAYANA'S BLESSINGS

पुष्करानुजन्म वह्नि शीतभानुपूर्वजै र्नीलकंजबंधुना च संयतैरुदेति या।
नृसिंह शक्ति रुग्रविक्रमोग्र मानिनी मंत्रराजरूपिणी महेश्वरी गतिर्मम ॥

'May She, Maheswari, who wakes up along with all gods, very powerful, the form of the great mantras and the power of Nrisimha, be my refuge (to the Peetham of Chandramouleeswara).'

- Devi Stotram

Nayana prostrated to Bhagavan, got his blessings and started for Sirasi. In the state of Karnataka, near to Gokarna and in the valley of Sahya mountains, there are some villages. Though they are sparsely populated, they abound in the rare plants of spices and hence are centers of business. As they are at 2000 feet high from Sea-level, they are famous as summer resorts.

Nayana reached Gokarna and stayed for three days in the house of Daivarata. As Daivarata went to the banks of Bhadra river for tapas, his household was serving Nayana. Sitarama Bhadati, the younger brother of Daivarata was an Ayurvedic physician. He lived in Kuluve village a little distant from Sirasi. As Daivarata informed him of Nayana's arrival, he came to Sirasi and made arrangements to take Nayana to Kuluve. On the fourth day of arrival at Sirasi, Nayana started for Kuluve along with Bhadati in an automible.

It was 11 P.M. Nayana was rather tired as he was sitting all the while in the car from early morning. He asked Bhadati to stop somewhere to take rest. They saw Lakshmi Nrisimha Chandramouleswara Peetham on the way and stopped there to take rest.

This Peetham is really Sankaramatham (Pitham started by Viswananda Bharati). Both Vishnu and Siva were worshipped in that Pitham. It is on the banks of the river Salmali, the king of Sonada-Swarnavalli were the endowers of the Matham.

Sri Sarvajnendra Saraswati was the authority of the Mutt when Nayana visited it. He heard of Nayana's fame and thought it a good fortune to serve him and showing due respect, he supplied Nayana with all the facilities available. After taking rest for sometime Nayana enquired about the welfare of the Mutt.

With a heavy heart, the Pithadhipati told Nayana that the Pitham was quite prosperous in the past, but at that time the maintainers, the Kings of Sonada and Swarnavalli, were fighting in the court on some point and so could not furnish the necessary money to maintain the Mutt. Since three years there was dearth of money even for the daily worship. They were getting on somehow on the offerings of the devotees.

Hearing this sad story, Nayana felt very sad and his eyes were brimmed with tears. He felt distressed at the condition of the Kingly class which drove the country to the foreign rule.

उदित विरोधा स्वयुतभिदासु। चतसृषु जाति ष्वबलत मासु ॥

'There are many internal differences in the four castes. And so, there are quite many infights among the four castes.'

मुहुरपि लोके क्षितिसुरशीले अजगणकल्पे भुजभुवसंघे ॥

The Brahmins lost their character due to worldliness. The kings have started fighting among themselves.

चतुरविरोधिव्रतहृतसारां अविरतनेत्र सृतजलधारां।
भरतधरित्रीं भुवननृपाल अवतु दयालुः सितगिरिशालः ॥

'May the Lord Siva who resides on the Silver mountain save the land of Bharat which has lost its strength due to the cleverness of the enemies and is crying incessantly.'

As soon as Nayana prayed thus, he had the vision of Arunachala. Nayana, like Christ in the past prayed, 'I have come to pray to you as the representative of the Indians'.

अरुणधरित्रीधर हर दूनां भरतधरित्री मव शिव दीनाम् ।।

'O' Siva! Please save our land of Bharat which is in distress'.

हर भरतक्ष्माजनवरदूतं कुरुचरितार्थ गणपति मेतम् ।।

'O' Siva! I have come to you as the messenger of the land of Bharat. Make me, Ganapati, fulfilled in purpose.'

Hearing Nayana's prayer, the Pithadhipati felt that Lords Siva and Vishnu were present then and there. He must have felt bad to have given pain to Nayana with the distressful account of the condition of the Mutt. So he told Nayana, 'Acharya! I consider your prayer as blessings to this Pitham. So, I will henceforth dedicate myself to the uplift of the country in the method of Adi Sankara.'

Nayana said, 'Yes! That was the goal of Sankara. These Pithams have been started only for that purpose'.

Nayana took rest for the day in that place and next day, starting for Kuluve wrote down the prayer on a paper and told the Pithadhipati to keep it in the altar. After some time the maintainers won their case in the court and started to maintain the Peetham as before. Considering Nayana's blessings as the cause of this good fortune, the slokas were kept framed in the Mutt.

Chapter 16

BROTHER PASSES AWAY

पोषविधाने शीतं दैवं शोषविधाने तपनं दैवं।
सर्गविधाने विकसद्दैवं प्रलयविधाने मीलद्दैवम्॥

'The deity is cool in sustaining activity, hot in drying up activity, blooming in creative activity, and converging in destructive activity!'

As Nayana resided in Gokarna for a long time, many people around Gokarna became Nayana's devotees. Daivarata, Nayana's disciple was also much esteemed by them. Hence they celebrate Nayana's birth and death anniversaries on a grand scale.

By the time Nayana reached Kuluve along with Bhadati people arrived in crowds from the adjoining villages to have Nayana's darshan. The local populace invited him in the Vedic method. A hut was constructed for Nayana's stay. Everyday huge crowds gathered to have thirtha (holy water) from Nayana's hands. In the evening a big crowd used to gather to hear Nayana speak. Nayana used to spread Ramana's teachings around Kuluve regularly. The people used to tell their woes to Nayana and the holy mantra water that he gave them assuaged their difficulties. Nayana used to speak on Ambika Sakti which is the peaceful Sakti in the good and pleasing Sakti in the nature and so forth.

The public of Kuluve arranged a big meeting for Nayana's scriptural talks. A platform was erected outside the village precincts and there were stacks of hay all around in the fields. Nayana was speaking and the audience was in raptures. Suddenly four to five hay-

stacks started burning. The audience was agitated, but Nayana told them to be calm and uttered a Rig Veda mantra - वनेम पूर्वीरर्यो मनीषा अग्निः सुशोको विश्वान्यस्याः ।। - and threw a piece of dried grass towards the fire. Wonderfully, the wind threw the burning hay hither and thither weakening the fire and gradually bringing it under control. Afterwards water was poured on the remaining fire and it subsided completely. With this incident, people's esteem for Nayana grew tremendously. But Nayana considered it as an inauspicious incident.

The relatives in Kaluva Rai heard that Nayana's health was not good and he went to Kuluve for rest. They got very much worried. After the death of Nrisimha Sastri, his brother Prakash Sastri was looking after the affairs of Nayana with the help of Nayana's brothers, Bhima Sastri and Sivarama Sastri. Sivarama Sastri was sent to Kuluve to plead with Nayana and bring him to Kaluva Rai.

Sivarama's arrival made Nayana very happy. Sivarama was his friend in tapas. He went to ever so many holy places along with Nayana and served him to the best of his ability. They both embraced each other and tears flowed down their cheeks. Sivarama asked Nayana to come home as his health was not good. Nayana replied that he was alright in Kuluve and the people there looked after him with great care. They slept quite well that night. Next morning, both the brothers finished the morning ablutions and sat for meditation. Sivarama had a mild pain in the heart after some time. He informed Nayana of this. He took some rice with buttermilk for lunch and suddenly the pain in the heart shot up with violence. Sivarama shouted thrice, the breath rattled thrice and he fell into Nayana's hands dead. It was 7-02-1930. 'My brother is no more. He has come to me and died like a hero', said Nayana sadly and performed the obsequies.

That night the wife of the landlord Seethamma had a dream. She saw a woman disturbing a dead body. Sivarama got up from the corpse as a bright young man. She asked him, 'Are you alive?'. 'Yes', he said, 'I am going to the banks of Narmada to do tapas', and disappeared. She told Nayana about her dream. Nayana said in a deep tone,

That addict of tapas,
That lover of tirthas
Went to Narmada
To perform tapas
The Will of God is at work.

When uncle Sivarama passed away, it became Mahadeva's duty to look after the father. So, he reached Kuluve along with his wife to serve his father.

Chapter 17

THE SAT-DARSANAM

सत्तत्वसारं सरलं दधाना मुमुक्षुलोकाय मुदं दधाना ।
अमानुषश्रीरमणीयवाणीमयूख्यभित्तिर्मुनिवाग्विभाति ॥

'The word of the Superhuman Ramana, giving out the essence of truth, simple and giving happiness to all the seekers of Truth is shining through the words of Muni Ganapati.

- Sat-Darshanam

Every one naturally has the aspiration to realize the Truth. Aspirants resort to various ways like worship, repetition of the name and tapas to achieve this end. As a result certain people develop a keen desire to reach the goal. The fitness of the aspirants must be tested by themselves on the anvil of certain principles. They must question themselves thus :-

1. Can I take up a work that I dislike giving up one that I like?
2. If some one tells me that the search for Truth changes totally the present mode of my life, am I ready to give up the old mode and take up a new one?
3. When the search proves to be very difficult, am I ready to continue my sadhana uninterruptedly?
4. Even if I face death like Nachiketas, will I continue the search for Truth?

If one can answer these questions in the positive, that person can certainly attain Liberation. Sat-darsanam

is a book which can guide an aspirant surely to the goal of the attainment of Truth. Sri Ramana wrote a treatise in Tamil called Ulladu Narpadu. This is a purely philosophic work. It can be considered as a book at par with the Upanishads and Brahma Sutras. Bhagavan asked Nayana to translate it into Sanskrit.

Nayana who went with Mahadeva to Kaluva Rai stayed there for four months and at the incessant request of Sirasi citizens went back to Sirasi in February 1931.

A great personage called Pundarika Raya spent some time in foreign countries, worked as a barrister, came back to Sirasi and built an ashram there to spend his later life in peace. But due to certain conditions he could not stay in that ashram. So it was arranged for Nayana to stay in the ashram which was called 'Anandashramam'.

The residents of Sirasi, Sri S.D. Viswamitra, S.P. Pandit, Sundara Pandit and some others were supplying Nayana's needs. Kapali Sastri came along with his family. Nayana was giving discourses in Kannada to the delight of Sirasi residents. There was daily chanting of Vedas and japa and homa were going on regularly and the atmosphere reminded one of a rishi's ashram of yore.

Viswanadha Brahmachari personally brought the Tamil composition of The Forty verses to Nayana. Nayana was extremely glad to receive the order of Bhagavan to translate the composition into Sanskrit. He immediately wrote a letter to Bhagavan to express his joy at receiving such a glorious proposition from him.

O' Guhavatara, Bhagavan!

You already know through the letters of Kapali, Sundara Pandit and Viswanadha that I am engaged here in tapas along with my followers. Since three days there are happenings which are giving me extreme happiness. Many people are getting Bhagavan's darshan in their

dreams. They all sincerely believe that it is the sure grace of Bhagavan.

Lord! That nishta (steadiness) which I got through God's grace is becoming experiential to me here. I am experiencing Atma in the cave as separate from the body. But I consider it as incomplete because it is not different from the worldly experience. For the attainment of that complete nishta, I am praying to you to send your grace which can jump over many miles of distance in a trice. The Sakti which I used to experience previously was a heavy flow and was only a flow of force. But now the Sakti is very light and is a flood of light. I hope through the grace of Bhagavan the gods will get inspired for me and reform me for the fulfillment of the great purpose. May you send your graceful look as reply to me.

Mahadeva Viswanadha, Ranga, daughter of Sitarama and Kapali along with his wife are permanent residents of this ashram. The sister of Sundara Pundit and Devendra Sarma come in the evening. All of them are eager for Bhagavan's grace.

Servant of Bhagavan
Vasishta Ganapati

Reading out Bhagavan's Tamil poem, explaining its greatness, composing the proper translation in Sanskrit and describing the poetic excellence of the poem to Kapali, Viswanadha and Mahadeva, Nayana completed the translation of The Forty verses into Sanskrit in four days by 14-03-1931. The Sanskrit translation was given the name of Sat-Darsanam. Two copies were taken. One was sent through Mahadeva to Bhagavan with a letter.

Anandashramam, Sirasi
17-03-1931

Bhagavan, World teacher!

The heart prompts me to send a letter to your presence weekly once. On Saturday, 14-03-1931,

Satdarsanam has been completed. Bhagavan's meaning of Sukla Chandas (Yagna Valkya Sutra) was done into upajati metre. Whatever merit there is in my work is Bhagavan's own. From that Saturday, my vision was getting transformed. I am seeing all things as one. I am praying to Bhagavan to make this vision permanent. I am observing all these various forms in the one Sadvastu like bubbles on water. Rejecting these bubbles, I am trying to see the Suddha Sat Rupa (Absolute Existence).

Eager for your grace,
Vasishta

Mahadeva started for Arunachala with the Sat-darsana in his hand. Kapali Sastri had an inner prompting to write a commentary on Sat-darsanam. He told Nayana about his desire and Nayana gave his approval. All the prayerful poems Nayana composed on various gods were compiled into a book form and titled Gitamala. Nayana gave a copy of Gitamala to Mahadeva to be given to Bhagavan.

Meanwhile the upnayanam of Daivarata's son was decided to be performed in Gokarna. He came in person and invited Nayana to Gokarna for the ceremony. Nayana wrote his next weekly letter to Bhagavan from Gokarna.

Gokarnam
21-04-1931

O' Bhagavan! The All pervading!

As Daivarata requested my presence at his son's upanayanam, I had to come to Gokarnam. I will start from here on Saturday. He who is the dweller of the cave, he who resides in the bodies of beings and expands in the hearts of yogis, he whose inner expansion is called the second birth, he whom the knowers of mantras extol as Vaiswanara and the scholars as Virat Purusha, he who is the embodiment of knowledge, to whom knowledge is the

body, residence and weapon, he is my younger brother to whom I prostrate.

The Elder one

Mahadeva went to Arunachala and handed over the copy of Sat-darsana to Bhagavan. Nayana made some changes in the original in the translation and Maharshi was glad and approved of them. Mahadeva informed Nayana about Bhagavan's approval. Nayana, with great elation replied to Bhagavan.

Anandashramam, Sirasi
28-04-1931

O' Bhagavan, The Merciful!

I have received the letters from Mahadeva and Sundara and came here from Gokarna. Appu couple has arrived. Viswanadha also came along with me to Sirasi. Kapali's commentary on Sat-Darsanam is progressing well. The changes I have made in the Sat-Darsana seem to have been approved by you as true to the original according to Mahadeva's letter. It made me ecstatic. Sat-Darsana will turn out a glorious book after Kapali completes his commentary. Mahadeva writes that the sloka I composed in the Chapter, 'Exchanges between Guha and Ganapati' was enjoyed by you and made you smile. Mahadeva had the fortunate vision of seeing your glorious smile, it seems. That news itself made us happy beyond measure. I wish my child, 'Gitamala' may be fondled with Bhagavan's own hand.

After the great treatise, Updesa Saram of Bhagavan, this Sat-Darsanam seems to be popular and is studied as a text in many ashrams. It is rendering a lot of help to aspirants. To the seekers of truth, Sat-Darsanam is a revealing treatise.

Chapter 18

DEVOTIONAL LETTERS

अतीतगुणजालाय नैष्ठिकब्रह्मचारिणे ।
नमो मायामनुष्याय गुरवे तारकारये ॥

'I bow to the guru who is beyond qualities, who is a celibate, who is an embodiment of God and who is Kumara Swamy, the enemy of Tarakasura.

- Chatvarimsat

Among Bhagavan's works, Akshara Manamala stands special. God, Eswara is the hero and Bhagavan, the heroine of this poem. The various sentiments of devotion, love and self-offering of the heroine are rendered in a unique form of poetry. Detachment and philosophy lie subdued throughout the length of the poem. There is nothing secret between the Nayaka and Nayaki. Bhagavan depicts the relationship of devotee and God as that of a Nayika and Nayaka. The poet sometimes blames God for unkindness and injustice which is also a method of praise in the disguise of blaming (नीन्दास्तुति) in poetry. This relationship is the same that exists between the disciple and the guru. We understand this point if we study the sentiment in Nayana's letters. The weekly letters that Nayana wrote to Bhagavan reveal this relationship of Bhagavan and Nayana.

(A) No Initiative

Everyone knows that Maharshi does not possess any initiative. A yogi like Seshadri tried to find out whether Bhagavan had any initiative and failed in his attempt. It was Nayana who made Bhagavan responsive. It was Nayana who was the cause of propagating Bhagavan's

teaching to the world. Many times Nayana pleaded with Bhagavan to give up silence and be a guru to aspirants.

'Alas! What a sad plight is that of a child whose mother does not feed it at her breast! If the Lord of creation gets angry, who can save a creature? If you, O' Guru! Do not remove the doubts of your disciples, how do these people, who are deluded by thousands of illusions, can get over this ocean of Life?' We must consider that Maharshi responded to Nayana's request. This letter of Nayana ensures this fact.

Anandashramam
Sirasi
24-03-1931

(A) O' Bhagavan, Karanaguru!

By God's grace, we are all immersed in the light of the mercy of Bhagavan. O! the destroyer of illusion! Even now my mind's differential concept has not died. If you radiate a moment's initiative, I know this will disappear and my identification with the whole world will result. But I know that there does not exist, even a slight thought of initiative in you. Only the Lord is able to create such a thought in you. You may ask why I resort to this round about method of prayer. Why does God, instead of Himself showering grace, make someone else do it? Only holy people know this secret. It is the divine rule that when an avatar is awake in the world, God does not do anything Himself. Hence I am praying to God to create such thought (initiative) in your mind.

Your brother of the previous birth.

Maharshi seems to have accepted Nayana's request. Indirectly viewed, Nayana himself was Maharshi's initiative thought.

(B) The Cook –

Bhagavan used to say in fun, 'Nayana has made me a cook'. In the book, 'Chatvarimsat', Nayana says,

यदि न जननी स्तन्यं दद्याच्छ्चिशोर्बत का गतिः
यदि पशुपतिः क्रोधं कुर्यात्पशोरवनं कुतः ।
यदि पदजुषा माचार्यत्वं निहंसि न संशयं
भ्रमशतपराभूता एते तरंतु भवं कथम् ।।

'You are cooking food for Siva with the flesh of Cattle (men) destroying their ego.'

By the removal of the ego in men, God can be realized. Hence Maharshi is extolled as a cook who crushes and cooks the ego into a shapeless mass. In Sirasi also a lady seemed to be doing the same thing. Let us see who the lady was.

Anandashramam, Sirasi
15-07-1931

O' Glorious Being!

By God's grace, all are well here. Because of constant rains, days are short. But heated up by a divine energy, our hearts are quite active. There is no sunshine at all. But we are all feeling as though we are under full sunshine. We do not forget that this cooking of our being is being done by a cook called God. This job of this cook has no remuneration. A lady also is helping you in this activity. Who is she! She is goddess Renuka whose son was Parasurama who crushed the arrogance of kings and who is the sixth manifestation of God Vishnu. Above the devotees and the all-knowing Jnani's, there is the Lord who activates all of them. May He get food cooked quickly through the agency of this cook and enjoy the food.

The cooked food
in the form of Man

(c) New Year Blessings!

Anandashramam
Sirasi
14-04-1931

O' Bhagavan, Dweller of Dahara!

I desire you to accept our good wishes on the day of this New Year and bless us showering prosperity with your grace. By your kindness may this year be a fully successful year for us. My Lord! Tapas having ripened, ego destroyed, been steady in the original state, all the senses fixed in Bhagavan, I was thinking that everything was achieved. May my steadiness in knowledge lead me to steadiness in the knowledge of the Source. I know that this ultimate desire will be fulfilled. I am awaiting that blessed point of time. Even though this person is far away from thee, may he shine as if in your presence. O' Lord! You are always dwelling in my heart. I am always lying at your feet. You are my Lord who deputes me and I am your servant who carries out your order.

Entirely yours,
Vasishta

•••

Anandashramam
Sirasi
9-06-1931

O' Bhagavan, Playing in human form!

Please accept our prostrations on the occasion of the Mahapuja of Sri Mata (The Mother). Like Kausalya to Sri Rama, who gave succour to the rishis and like Devaki to Sri Krishna, who disseminated Yoga Vidya, like Renuka to Parasurama, the celibate since childhood, like Maya Devi to the Buddha, the saviour of all creatures, like Mary to the Son (Christ), who bore the sins of mankind, She, who had, with these qualities in one place, given birth to

you for the welfare of mankind, for the destruction of the darkness of ignorance, to drive away perverted intellects, to impart the Truth, is Saundaryamba, the divine spouse of Sri Sundaram Iyer, to whom I prostrate. I prostrate to the Matrubhuteswari Bhagavati in whom she, Soundaryamba has taken her abode. Sundara's flowery letter to hand. The Ashram is as though emitting its perfume. The letter which reveals the message of Bhagavan was also received. My heart rests in peace. Kapali's commentary of Sat-Darsanam is almost finished.

He who wears the dust of Sri Ramana Bhagavan's feet,

Vasishta

Chapter 19

DEVOTIONAL LETTERS

The Sat-Darsanam that Nayana brought out reached Ramanasramam and attracted many scholars. But some people brought to Bhagavan's notice that certain slokas deviated from the original. Bhagavan supported Nayana's exposition. Sundara Krishna Vasishta informed Nayana of this and Nayana's joy knew no bounds. Immediately he wrote to Bhagavan his feelings.

Anandashramam
Sirasi
3-06-1931

O' Bhagavan, Friend of the Distressed!

Sundara Krishna through his letter conveyed Bhagavan's exposition. Our doubts were cleared. The clarification that you gave, 'The non-existence of the limited is the same to both the Liberated and Eswara' has removed all our doubts. There is Eswara who is the Lord of Creation. The Liberated has a personality. Their experiences are the same and devoid of thoughts and thoughtlessness. This has become clear to us through your words. Hence the argument that Sat-Darsanam is giving scope to drishti-Srishti argument is annulled. This answer is inhered in Sat-Darsanam itself.

<u>Commentary on Sat-Darsanam (offering)</u>

Anandashramam, Sirasi
7-04-1931

O' Bhagavan, the descendent of Parasara!

We are all safe and sound by the grace of Bhagavan. The commentary on Sat-Darsanam has been

started by dear Kapali. I myself suggested the name 'Bhashyam' (commentary) keeping in view the greatness of the original. Kapali says that when observed properly, Sat-Darsanam has great depth. I understood its depth as soon as it was given out by you. Even though the text is quite small, it is aphorismatic in its exposition of the secrets of tattwa and yoga sastras (the sciences of yoga and tattwa). Still there is no derogation of other religions in it. Even then the attitude of others is strangely countered. The arguments touch the hearts of both the scholars and lay persons alike. Though no scripture is taken as a standard, it shines out as the essence of all Vedas. By explaining these, the commentator has to contradict quite many points. There are new things to be understood also. But the commentary should not be too vast. As the points clarified are not to be skipped, the most important ones should be selected for commenting. If a little of Bhagavan's grace is got Kapali would be able to do the job.

Unwavering Devotion to the Guru, Eswara and the Mother-land (Offering).

Nayana's love of mother land was greater than his love of tapas. Gandhiji took up the method of Karma-yoga (service) to serve his country. To serve the people and to promote knowledge, Nayana took up tapas as the means. His devotion was exhibited thus :-

Anandashramam, Sirasi
5-05-1931

O' Bhagavan! Illusion of human form!

Here it is all well and good. O' Lord! I am eager to present at your feet my present condition. Some consider great happiness as the supreme goal. Some others

consider the highest attainment in yoga as the most desirable thing. The state of being beyond pleasure and pain seems to be the target of some others. Conquering death happens to be the ultimate desire of some people. But, I consider the destruction of desire as the most beautiful goal to reach. Some useless desires have subsided. Some have been experienced and died. Some were driven out and destroyed. But Lord! I do not know whether there is any sense in it. One desire is left over. I do not have the power to resist it. Neither have I a desire to shove it off. I am praying for God's help. Bhagavan, perhaps knows it (the welfare of the country).

Yours

Anandashramam, Sirasi
22-07-1931

O' Bhagavan, Lover of Thy devotees!

The glory of the result of repetition of mantra was attained. The essence of Yoga was perceived. The scriptures are well-read. Tapas was done with severity. The rise and spread of the Kundalini Sakti was experienced. The source of 'I' was reached. In silence the nature's ripening was witnessed. The sense of separation was given up. Attachment to phenomena was rejected. Still I was not satisfied. Now I want to get satisfaction only through devotion. There are three objects to this devotion – one is Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, the second is Bhagavan Indra and the third is Bhagavati Mother Bharat Bhoomi.

Your Devotee since long,
Ganapati

Anandashramam, Sirasi
1-07-1931

I have composed a small stotram 'Prachanda Chandi Trisati'. Ranga Rao has copied a Chapter of it for himself. Now I am doing 'Indra Sahasram'. It is Bhagavan's burden to see through the job I have taken up.

Sri Ramana's devotee
Vasishta

Nayana's letters which are like standards in Bhakti, Jnana and yoga are many. Only some of them were given here as examples.

Chapter 20

LIMITED BODY; UNLIMITED SAKTI OF TAPAS

तव शक्तिझरीपतनं बहिरद्भुतवृष्टिरिव ।
इदमंतरनंतबले मदिरारसपानमिव ॥

'O' Devi! When your power falls on the outside (head) it feels like a wonderful shower. When it works inside it feels like intoxication due to drinking.'

- Prachanda Chandi Trisati

'Dhyana must be continuous like an electrical current. That is called Samadhi or Kundalini Sakti', said Maharshi once. When Kavya Kanta had the Kapala Bheda, Maharshi applied castor oil on his head and cooled the heat. He said, 'I am here to look after Nayana. But who is there for me?' That means this Sakti patha is common in Self-realized souls.

मूर्ध्नि आधायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणम् ॥

This Gita quotation also proves this point. The energy called Taijasa runs from Muladhara to Sahasrara every moment. A yogi who has attained this Kundalini Sakti knows this movement like the movement of the respiration. The mistress of Kundalini Sakti, called Prachanda Chandi is described by Nayana in three hundred verses. He describes his own experiences also in that stotram. To one who has experienced this immense immeasurable power the body naturally becomes a hindrance.

Nayana's body which was the playground of this sakti could not adjust to strong tastes like hot, sour, and

saltish tastes. But devotees used to bring varieties of food as offerings and he had to taste atleast a little of them for their satisfaction. As the body was getting older, it could not bear this condition. His body started to show diabetic condition, but Nayana would not let anybody know of it. Some slokas in Prachanda Chandi Trisati indicated the condition and suffering of his body.

सहता मिद मम्ब वपु स्तव नाट्यमपारजवं।
बहिरंतर शत्रुसहं भजतां बहुलं च बलम्॥

O' Mother! Let this body be able to bear the speed of thy dance. Grant it the power to withstand the onslaught of both inner and outer enemies.'

पृथिवी च सहेत न ते तटिदीश्वरि नाट्यजवं।
करुणा यदि देवि न ते वपुषामिह का नु कथा॥

'O Mother Lightning! Even the earth cannot bear the speed of your dance. As such, what about this human body if your compassion is not there?'

वार्धकेन बलकांतिहारिणा धारणेनकटुकार्यकारिणा।
ग्रस्तमेत मधुना पुनः कुरु त्राणदे युवकवत्पदाश्रितम्॥

'The body is getting weak through old age. Unless you give youth again to this body, which has taken refuge in you, it cannot hold the dance of your sakti.'

The sojourn in Anandashramam did not suit Nayana. Though it was very congenial to sadhana and scholarly activities, Nayana was not able to eat the offerings of the devotees. Mahadeva came to Sirasi to attend to Nayana. As Kuluve was more conducive to Nayana's health, he was taken to Kuluve.

Mahadeva took great care of Nayana and Nayana got well in course of time. Daughter-in-law Rajeswari used to prepare the food that Nayana could take. Thus Nayana spent a peaceful life in Kuluve from 1932-1934. He wrote the aphorism text of 'Dasa Maha Vidyadi Sutra Grandhavali' during that period. This was the scripture of the ten avatars of Parasakti. Nayana had the revelations of all the mantras enunciated in that book. He started to write a novel called 'Poorna' in Sanskrit.

Mahadeva had five issues of female children, but only two of them survived. For the purpose of getting a male child, Nayana initiated Rajeswari into Indra Mantra. After repetition of this mantra, Rājeswari had four children, three of them were male and they survived.

As Nayana's health recovered, the disciples wanted Nayana back in Anandashramam. They started collecting funds to improve the ashram. Mahadeva was afraid that Nayana's health may again worsen if he went to Anandashramam. So, he pleaded with Nayana that they had better go home where a small hut could be constructed exclusively for Nayana and the family could serve him.

Nayana, who knew the future looked at his son's face radiating devotion to father and agreed.

Chapter 21

THE FINAL CALL

पाहिवा पशुपते जहीहि वा जीवनं तव पदोः समर्पितं।
देहि वा विमुखता मुसेहि वा प्रार्थये किमपि नाथ नापरम्॥

'O' Lord of all creations! Save me or leave me. But my life is dedicated to thy feet. I do not ask of thee anything else whether thou showerest thy grace or otherwise.'

- Siva Satakam

Once there was a devotee of Rama living on the banks of river Godavari. One day, Rama appeared to him in a dream and told him to start on a boat to Bhadradri. On the way, Pushpaka Vimana (divine plane) would be sent for him, boarding which he would be taken to Vaikunta (Vishnu's abode).

The next morning with great joy the devotee told his wife about his glorious dream. Accordingly the couple got ready and boarded the boat. The devotee was immersed in contemplating on Sri Rama and the wife was looking all around for the place which was to take them to Vaikunta. When they had gone half-way on Godavari, she saw the Pushpaka coming down the sky. She cried out, 'There is the Pushpakam', and started to collect her bundles. The devotee silently boarded the plane and it started going up. The poor woman who was still collecting her bundles was, of course, left alone!

Nayana, who is always immersed in the thought of God does not differentiate one place from the other. Once a gentleman said to Sri Ramana, 'Bhagavan, I have traveled two days to come here!' Bhagavan told him, it was not you who travelled. Only the body travelled.' Jnanis have no love of relatives as such. Love of friends

and love of children do not mean anything to them. Only compassion towards the whole creation flows out from them.

All the friends and relatives were overjoyed to see Nayana in Kaluva Rai after a long long period. The news that Nayana was going to stay permanently at Kaluva Rai made them all very happy. Nayana was God's avatar born in the line of Ayyala Somayajula. An avatar sanctifies 7 generations previous to him and 7 generations after him. People used to come in crowds to have Nayana's darshan and it became a great trial for Mahadeva to manage them. But he dealt with them all with great care and consideration.

Mahadeva was trying to construct a two-room Kutir for Nayana, at a distance of two furlongs from the house. Nayana decided to enter it on 14-9-34. Meanwhile the Andhra University was celebrating its anniversary in Visakhapatnam. Having heard that Nayana was so near at hand in Kaluva Rai, the Andhra University Secretary invited Nayana to speak, sending him a special invitation. Sir S Radhakrishnan was the Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University at that time. He was the nephew of Nayana's disciple, Sri Sarvepalli Narasimham, who later took the name, Pranavananda. Sri Radhakrishna had heard of Nayana through his uncle. He used to listen to Nayana when Mahadeva was being taught Sanskrit by Nayana. Now he was very happy to have the opportunity of hearing Nayana's lectures.

The anniversary celebrations were performed on a grand scale. Nayana gave lectures on Maha Bharata on two consecutive days. 'Mahabharata story happened in Vedic times. The names of the Maha Bharata heroes were mentioned in Rig Veda. The great-grandsire of Pandavas, Santanu, was the youngest brother of Devapi, who was the author of Rig Veda Suktas. Sri Krishna existed 138

generations previous to Chandragupta Maurya. The authors of Puranas changed the story of Mahabharata of the Vedic times and posited Vishnu in the place of Mahendra, who was the Lord of Creation. Indra was depicted as a vile character and given the position of Parjanya, the god of rain. Nayana in this method enthused many critics. The great scholars Tata Subbaraya Sastri and Kasinathuni Nageswara Rao attended the meeting. Nayana's lectures were published in the daily, 'Andhra Pathrika'.

Sri Radhakrishnan thought it would be good for the development of the department of Oriental research if Nayana would work in that department and offered him the post of Dean of the department. But Nayana declined the offer, saying, 'Dean? Who is Dean?' just in the same way he declined a Professor's post in the university of Calcutta. As is usual with ascetics, he was averse to power and position. But he wrote a critical work on Bharata (India), called, 'The critical analysis of the History of India' for the enlightenment of the posterity on the insistence of critics of History.

Learning that Nayana was residing in Kaluva Rai, the Maruvada Prasadarao couple arrived. He was the son-in-law of Nayana's paternal cousin Suryanarayana Sastri. He was worldly-wise and a good conversationalist. He had performed some worships and got afflicted by planets and was distressed, and wanted to take Nayana to Kharagpur as he believed Nayana's presence would relieve him of his planetary afflictions. So he insisted on taking Nayana along with him to Kharagpur. Both Mahadeva and the son of Sivarama Sastri were dead against the proposal of Prasada Rao. Still Prasada Rao was adamant and promised to take utmost care of Nayana's health. His wife also pleaded piteously with Nayana to come and stay in her house for atleast two months. Mahadeva did not

know how to counter this request of this lady. He brought Nayana from Sirasi to Kaluva Rai expressly to give him a peaceful atmosphere among his own relatives and so built an ashram and a date was also fixed for the warming of the house.

Nayana heard the arguments of both parties. He knew the intention of Prasada Rao, and the son's distress also. Nayana closed his eyes and meditated for a few minutes and opened his eyes saying, 'Well, the call comes, I have to leave'.

On 14-09-1934, with Simhalu, Sivarama's son accompanying him, Nayana left Kaluva Rai for Kharagpur in the company of Prasada Rao couple. Mahadeva was very much distressed. Who can detain those who knew the future?

Chapter 22

THE GRACIOUS LOOK

मुधा क्षिपस्यद्रिसुते कटाक्षान्
कैलासकान्तारमहीरुहेषु।
इतः किरेषत्तव नास्ति हानिः
सिद्ध्यत्यभीष्टं च समस्तमस्य ॥ 4-13-21

" 'O' Daughter of the mountain! Your gracious looks are going wasted falling on the trees of the Himalayan forests. Please direct them a little towards me. You do not lose anything, but this creature benefits infinitely."

It is the Himalayan region. The supremely high peak of Kailasa is shining pure with snow. This kingly peak is considered the abode of Siva and Parvati which seems to declare to the whole world the peace loving nature of the land of Bharat. Nayana used to say that the gracious looks of Mother Parvati are the source of the spiritual glory of Adi Sankara and other great rishis who lived and are living on this mountain.

In such a divine and sacred atmosphere, a holy man was pouring oblation to the sun. A devotee standing nearby was witnessing the whole scene. Suddenly the holy man looked at the devotee and asked him to stretch out his hands. He poured some water into those hands and looked at the devotee with infinite grace.

This was a dream that a gentleman called Guntur Lakshmi Kantam had ten years previously. He strongly resolved in himself that the same holy man of his dream should be his guru in life. He was the son-in-law of Akella Suryanarayana who in later life became

Jnanananda Bharati. At the time when Nayana was living in Kharagpur, this gentleman was living in Calcutta with the firm belief that his guru would come to him.

Nayana resided in Kharagpur in the house of Prasada Rao. The Pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Sri Chandrasekhara Saraswati was camping in Kharagpur at that time. Nayana went to have his darshan. Nayana used to be always in full dress, a dhoti, a shirt and an overlap. He would not change them even at meal-time. Since he had the Kapala Bheda, Nayana had discarded even the ritual dress of silk at meal-time. One had to be in the traditional dress with no upper garment if one wanted to meet the Pontiff of a Mutt. So, the attendants of Sri Chandrasekhara Saraswati obstructed Nayana at the gate. But the Swami saw Nayana from a distance and came out to meet him. He covered Nayana with the shawl on his own shoulder, invited him inside and made him seated. Swami arranged for a meeting of scholars and praised Nayana's greatness in tapas and Nayana sang Ambika Gitam in all thankfulness and prostrated before the Pontiff. The citizens of Kharagpur now understood the greatness of Nayana, and many elite of the town became his disciples. Nayana gave an inspiring lecture in the Indian Institute. A denizan of Calcutta, Namani Suryanarayana was very much impressed with Nayana's lecture and invited him to Calcutta. As a result of this invitation, Nayana reached Calcutta on 24-11-1934. His accommodation was arranged in the house of Guntur Lakshmikantam.

As not many people in Calcutta were acquainted with Nayana, all others except Sanjiva Rao left for their jobs in the morning. So, when Nayana arrived, Srimathi Suramma, Lakshmi Kantam's wife, was the first person who received Nayana and looked after his needs. At noon Lakshmi Kantam came home and was stunned when he

saw Nayana for the first time. His heart beat fast, he perspired profusely. He was speechless with wonder! This was the holy man whom he saw in his dream ten years previously! The guru who appeared in the Himalayan region in a dream was now here, in flesh and blood, in front of him, in his house!

Kantam regained his balance, did obeisance and asked the welfare of his guest. Nayana, as if, laid the corner stone to the building of Ramana's teaching in Calcutta. He was invited by the Telugu, Tamil and Malayala societies of Calcutta. They arranged for Nayana's lectures. Nayana gave out some autobiographical points also in his lectures in Calcutta. He used to clear the doubts of the audience on such points as the world, aeons of time, Avatara and Vedas. Many had the opportunity of learning about the life and teaching of Sri Ramana and greatness of Ramana and Ganapati. Everyday there was Satsang in Kantam's house. Nayana initiated many into Indrani mantra. He spent a happy time in Calcutta with Suramma attending to his requirements of food and other comforts.

The holy man of Kantam's dream was a dweller of Himalayas. Kantam one day expressed his doubt to Nayana whether he ever visited Himalaysa. Nayana said softly, 'I come from Himalayas and you saw my abode there in your dream,' and looked at him with a smile full of grace. That look made Kantam go introvert immediately.

Kantam wrote Nayana's biography in Telugu language and translated many of his works into Telugu. He says that it was only Nayana's grace which was the effective cause of all his development.

Nayana's disciples made all arrangements for an ashram in Kharagpur for his stay. Nayana was brought to

Kharagpur in the third week of August 1935. On 1-09-1935 which was the festival of Ganapati, Nayana was sat as the god on a platform and worshipped in the building of Andhra Pathasala. The worship was done in the regular Vedic method with inviting and sending off the god which was considered an ill-omen by some. But Nayana did not mind whatever his devotees did.

Chapter 23

MAHA NIRVANA

योऽन्तस्सुखो अन्तराराम स्तथाऽन्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥

'That yogi who is happy within himself, who is rested in himself, who is enlightened within, being Brahman himself attains the Bliss of Brahman.'

As soon as Nayana heard that Mahadeva begot a son, he went to Kaluva Rai from Kharagpur. The child was nemed Purandara, a name of Indra. A site for Ashram was procured in Kharagpur and the resident disciples of Kharagpur began to insist on Nayana's return to Kharagpur. To oblige them, Nayana started for Kharagpur on 21-9-35.

In December 1935, the corner-stone was laid for the Ashram in Kharagpur. Many people from Calcutta attended the function. Nayana promised to return after the construction was completed and went to Calcutta along with Kantam. He stayed with Kantam and finished thirty Chapters of the novel, 'Poorna'. The meaning for 'Viswa Mimamsa' was written down. 'The Criticism of Indian History' was done partly. By that time, the Kharagpur Ashram construction was finished and the disciples came to Calcutta to take Nayana to Kharagpur.

Nayana entered the Kharagpur Ashram on 25-4-1936. Simhalu, son of Sivarama Sastri, came from Kaluva Rai to attend to Nayana. As the house of S Suryanarayana happened to be close to the Ashram, Nayana's food was arranged to be sent from his house. It became rather

difficult for Suryanarayana to send food for two people daily. So, Simhalu started to go for Bhiksha into the town. On Saturdays, homam used to be performed in the Ashram and many people used to attend to it. In the evening, Nayana used to speak for a short time on various topics.

The houses of the disciples were far away. It used to be quite late by the time Simhalu returned from Bhiksha. So, Nayana used to be alone much of the time. He could digest only liquid food, but he never told anybody of his difficulty. As a result, he got a carbuncle in his armpit. It was a diabetic carbuncle, but was treated as an ordinary abscess. Diabetes also started manifesting.

One day Nayana told Suryanarayana, 'I will remain here for three months.' He did not understand this remark of Nayana. 'Where will you go Sir, after the three months?' Suryanarayana asked. 'I will go to get my works printed and published,' said Nayana. Suryanarayana considered it as a joke.

A disciple called Manikyam wanted Nayana's horoscope to be read. 'There is a period of dangerous change running, you can see it in the horoscope', said Nayana. But the disciple did not understand.

One day Nayana said, 'My divine body is well assembled and separated from the gross body and is under my control. I am going to attain Siddha Purusha state'.

On 21-7-1936, Nayana was very weak. He could not get up from the bed after his afternoon nap. The doctor asked him to be given glucose. But Nayana did not sip even a drop of water. Seeing this condition, Suryanarayana got perturbed and sent a telegram to Mahadeva and informed Lakshmi Kantam on phone.

As Nayana's tongue got hardened since twenty days, he could not speak properly. Nobody knew or cared about this condition. Not even the doctor noticed it.

Mahadeva reached Kharagpur on the evening of 23-7-1936. Kantam also arrived from Calcutta along with his wife. They gave Nayana a glass of fruit juice and Mahadeva inquired, 'How are you, Nayana?' with tear-brimmed eyes. Nayana smiled at them and wrote on a piece of paper, 'As you have come here just now, you can have a holiday.'

It was then 1 P.M. on 24th. Nayana drank some fruit juice and got up. He went to the verandah to ease himself and came back. After a little while, there was a big shower. The roof of the hut leaked in many places. The Ashram was not cleaned properly and so was rather dirty. Kantam looked around and said, 'This hut is not comfortable for you. It would be better if you shifted to the house of Parvatisam'. Immediately Nayana said, 'Tomorrow is Saturday. Moving out at 2-30 P.M. would be nice'. Nobody understood the meaning of those words. Kantam left for Calcutta.

On 25th, Nayana looked quite jubilant. He had two easy motions and felt light in the body. But the Sakti started rising from the base of the spine. Upto 2-15 P.M., Homam was going on. Nayana got down from his cot and heard the mantras chanted.

At 2-30 P.M., Nayana lay down on his bed and closed his eyes. The cranium separated. Mahadeva cried out with great sorrow, 'Father, what is your message to me?' Nayana stopped one moment before leaving the body, and said, 'जप ध्यानाधिकं दैवताराधनं महामनीः'. Do not give up Japa, dhyana and worship of the Lord'. The life of Nayana left the body through the head to the cosmos.

A great poet, Mantra drashta, an emperor among yogis, a rishi and a great tapaswi, Vasishta Ganapati Muni left the body for the lap of Mother Maheswari to be steady in the state of Anamaya.

In Arunachalam, Bhagavan sat in profound silence since the morning. The next day he received a telegram informing him of Nayana's Niryana, 'Nayana has gone!' 'Has Nayana gone? Where does he go? He has come here!' saying Bhagavn turned away to wipe a tear.

Chapter 24

SALUTATIONS TO NAYANA

श्रीमत्सर्वज्ञकल्पः सकलगुणनिधिः पूजनीयः परमात्मा
साक्षाद्विद्येशवाचस्पतिरिव सकलश्रौततत्त्वार्थवेत्ता।
अंतेवासी महर्षेः रमणभगवतो राजयोगी तपस्वी
वासिष्ठः मुनीन्द्रः जयति गणपतिः काव्यकण्ठो मुनीन्द्रः ॥

A Knower of almost everything, a most virtuous man, an inestimable person, Paramatma, almost Brihaspati in knowledge, knower of essence of all the Vedas, disciple of Sri Ramana Maharshi, a Raja Yogi, an austere man of penance, descendent of Vasishta, a great poet, Kavyakanta Sri Ganapati Muni stands glorified!

- Daivarata Gajanana

A rishi is the director who establishes noble values and protects the culture of our society. Sri Ganapati Muni was the last such rishi in Bharat who tried to re-establish the degenerating culture of Vedas. There is a divine purpose in his manifestation. The secret of the combined manifestation of Sri Ramana and Ganapati Muni is to reveal the meaning of the word tapas. Their relationship of guru and sishya is a continuation of their previous birth and their life reflects this relationship which is extolled in Vedic culture so greatly.

Tapas is the goal of human life which starts with a strong aspiration for a target. A true human being is one who awakens the Sakti underlying in himself, attains and remains steady in Self-Knowledge. Only such a one can become a true patriot and serve his country in a selfless spirit. Everyone must strive to achieve the highest

spiritual stature and help his country in its progress by the removal of social inequalities, proper development in economic, social and spiritual fields providing equal opportunities for men and women in all fields.

'Om' is the basic sound which is the source of infinite energies. A word spoken with perfect understanding and shining with self-knowledge has the power to produce the desired effect. The present knowledge of external phenomena is the product of the mine of knowledge inherent in many great souls. Nayana's life reflects this truth.

We find the beautiful teaching technique of Sankara in Nayana and the silence in his spirit in Sri Ramana Maharshi. Nayana declared himself as the messenger of gods. Bhagavan used to say about Nayana, 'When Nayana sings poetry, the gods stand in rows to hear him'. Nayana was a Vachaspati (guru of the gods) and Bhagavan was the silent one. One was a Muni and the other a Maharshi.

Nayana did tapas for the welfare of his country. This truth runs throughout his poetry. 'Poorna' was a novel which depicted the condition of the women in those days. Nayana could not complete it. His son Mahadeva Sastri completed this work started by Nayana and named it Satya Prabha which was situated in the times of Srikakula Andhra Maha Vishnu who was the founder of Andhradesam. This story was published in a magazine three decades ago.

Nayana lived for 13 years after he attained Kapala Bhedana. The life of this rishi should be an ideal for all aspirants.

The philosophic works of Nayana are beacon lights. The mantra parts of his works are treatises on the methodology of worship. It is the duty of all to study his

works thoroughly and improve their moral and spiritual stature. This is the only offering anyone can make with heart and soul to this great grand master.

जयतु भरतक्षोणिखण्डम् विषादविवर्जितम्
जयतु गणपस्तस्य क्षेमंविधातुमना मुनिः ।
जयतु रमणस्तस्याचार्यो महर्षिकुलाचलो
जयतु च तयोर्माता पूता महेशविलासिनी ।।

May the land of Bharat be rid of distress!

May Ganapati rest in glory who had this end as his goal!

May his guru Sri Ramana, the great Maharshi rest in glory!

May their mother the Divine spouse of Maheswara be glorified.

OM TAT SAT

Starting from 3 P.M. till night, Kundalini Sakti rose up powerfully filling the Sahasrara which merged me in an ocean of electric power. I did not know what to do. I was not sure that the body would withstand this sakti. I had not even the strength to speak. At 8 P.M. I was in the cave. The two parts of the cranium got loosened and because of the heat, got a little apart. It may be called broken also. This is Kapala Moksha. After that, Sakti flowed like gas from the head to the outside for three minutes. Then I became alright. Now, the electric power (Sakti) is freely going in and out of the body. A hand put on the head without touching it feels the power like gas. This means the bodily electricity has mingled with nature's electricity.

This is the very rare Kapala Bheda which all yogis strive for. There is none in the history who had survived Kapala Bheda like Nayana who lived for thirteen years more after the Siddhi.

MAHATAPASVI